

104

IMPACTS OF THE CLOSURE OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Y 4. G 74/7: P 38/7

Impacts of the Closure of Pennsylva...

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JUNE 7, 1996

Printed for the use of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight



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IMPACTS OF THE CLOSURE OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 1996

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:40 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Thomas M. Davis (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Davis and Norton.

Also present: Representative Moran.

Staff present: Ron Hamm, staff director; Howard Denis, counsel; Anne Mack, professional staff member; Ellen Brown, clerk; and Cedric Hendricks and Kimberly Williams, minority professional staff members.

Mr. DAVIS. Good morning; welcome to our oversight hearing on the Federal response to the impacts on the District of Columbia of the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, and the potential impacts of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

The executive and legislative branches have been very careful in not allowing the District to adversely impact the Federal Government. It is therefore incumbent upon the Federal Government, in assessing whatever its policy may be for Pennsylvania Avenue, to make sure that it is not acting unilaterally to adversely affect the District of Columbia. Rather, the Federal Government should assist the District in adjusting to Federal requirements.

In the interest of time, I will not read my complete opening statement and ask unanimous consent that it be inserted into the permanent record. Copies are available on the document table. But I want to emphasize that the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is clearly a regional issue. This is so, not only because of mutual concern about traffic and the healthy economy, but because of the environmental impact as well.

The District is part of a regionwide serious ozone nonattainment area. I have a letter from the Council of Governments which confirms my own belief that the gridlock caused by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has an adverse effect on the air quality. I ask unanimous consent that this letter be inserted into the record.

[The letter referred to follows:]

(1)



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

*Local governments working together
for a better metropolitan region*

June 6, 1996

District of Columbia

Bowie
College Park
Frederick
Frederick County
Gaithersburg
Greenbelt
Montgomery County
Prince George's County
Rockville
Takoma Park
Alexandria
Arlington County
Fairfax
Fairfax County
Falls Church
Loudoun County
Prince William County

Honorable Thomas M. Davis, III
Chairman
District of Columbia Subcommittee
349A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

ATTN: Mr. Ron Hamm

Dear Congressman Davis:

In response to a request from Mr. Hamm of your office regarding the air quality implications of closing certain downtown street sections, I am pleased to enclose a chart showing vehicle emissions at different vehicle speeds for the Washington region.

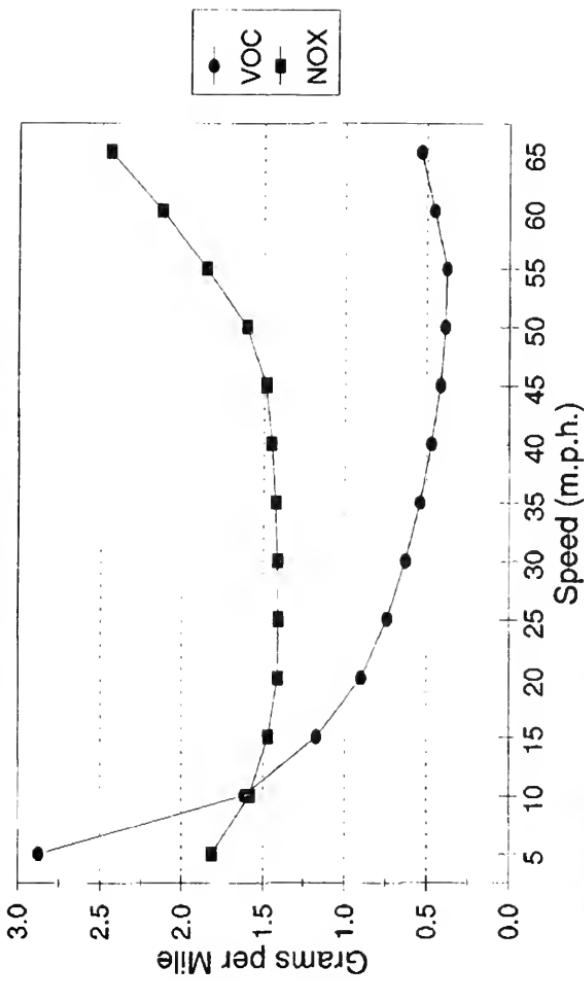
Under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, the Washington region was designated a serious non-attainment area for ozone, which is formed through the interaction of volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrogen oxides (NOx). The chart shows that for speeds below 30 mph both VOC and NOx emissions increase as vehicle speeds decline. Road closures in downtown areas which reduce overall vehicle operating speeds might well cause emissions increases in those areas, although such increases would constitute a relatively insignificant portion of the total emissions for the region.

I hope this information is helpful. If I can provide any additional clarification on this topic, please call me at 202-962-3310 or Mike Clifford of my staff at 202-962-3312.

Sincerely,

Ronald F. Kirby
Ronald F. Kirby
Director, Department of
Transportation Planning
(dd)

1996 Running Emission Factors
Washington Region -'Average' Vehicle
Stabilized Operating Mode



Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
EPA's Mobile6a Emission Factor Model

01HEM9551600000NOX/VOC.WB1

Mr. DAVIS. The air pollution impact provides added significance to our hearing. All regional jurisdictions, not just the District, are compelled by Federal law to take actions that will bring the Washington metropolitan area into compliance with the Clean Air Act. These actions may be made more onerous by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The scope of today's hearing will include the potential impact on the District of one particular section of the Anti-Terrorism Act that could lead to further loss of downtown parking and loss of business, and therefore loss of a tax base for a city right now in financial crisis. These actions, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and the future antiterrorism actions, are obviously Federal actions taken for Federal purposes. The District has no recourse but to comply.

It is the job of the Federal Government, in conjunction with the District, to assess the impacts and respond accordingly. I want to emphasize again that I view the action taken with regard to Pennsylvania Avenue as temporary. I am working toward the eventual reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue and am hoping to block any funds needed to make the closing permanent.

After I, with Delegate Norton's support, approached the chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, Chairman Regula, on this issue, he decided to include a provision in his bill to prohibit the Park Service from spending any funds, public or private, on permanent changes to Pennsylvania Avenue. I thank him for that action, and I applaud his efforts to preserve America's main street. I will work tirelessly to assure the language stays in the Interior appropriations bill.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Thomas M. Davis follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

Pennsylvania Avenue is a major arterial road for the District of Columbia. It was part of the L'Enfant Plan for the development of Washington, DC. Pennsylvania Avenue connects the Capitol to the White House and has been referred to as "America's Main Street." Any closing of this historic street has not only enormous symbolic impact, but immediate and devastating impact on the real city of Washington that lies just beyond the Monumental Core.

By closing Pennsylvania Avenue that link has been cut, creating a de facto division in the Nation's Capitol akin to the Berlin Wall. The adverse consequences to the City are enormous and growing, whether the closure is permanent or temporary. Here in Washington we know that "temporary" can mean a long, long time. I well recall the old ugly "Temporary Buildings" that lasted from World War II until the early '70's.

On May 19, 1995, Secretary of the Treasury, Robert E. Rubin, signed an Order prohibiting vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue and on certain other streets adjacent to the White House. The Secretary delegated to the Director of the United States Secret Service "all necessary authority to carry out such street closings."

At the hearing held by this Subcommittee on June 30, 1995, I stated that "The need for Presidential security and for temporary arrangements to effect that security is not questioned." That remains my position. However, it is the responsibility of Congress and the District working with the executive branch to ensure that what was a lawful temporary expedient does not harden into a permanent, unlawful, and unjustified fact of life.

The closure of Pennsylvania Avenue and other streets, parking restrictions undertaken as part of that activity, and future parking restrictions undertaken as a result of enactment of the Anti-Terrorism Act are purely federal actions taken for purely federal reasons. The District of Columbia, its residents, its commuters, its visitors, and the entire Washington region have been seriously impacted by this action in which they had no role.

I believe that the Federal Government should have a "hold harmless" policy toward those affected by these federal undertakings. This policy should include direct costs, revenues lost or foregone, and assistance in planning and implementing comprehensive actions to mitigate impacts on traffic flow, congestion, and air pollution. Congress and the executive branch must work together with the District of Columbia on this important matter, and I am concerned with the lack of coordination and communication over the past year since the closure was implemented.

The law provides that both the District of Columbia Government and Congress have key roles to play in any local street closings. Commuters, tour buses, taxis, and other motorists are vital stakeholders in the orderly flow of traffic. There are also serious money issues for Congress to review. The ripple effect of the Pennsylvania Avenue closing impacts parking meters, loading zones, and vending spaces in a wide area, as well as the general ability to conduct business.

Following the hearing last June, I communicated directly for several months with Secretary Rubin, attempting to obtain important information. For quite some time my letters were answered by subordinates who directed me to other departments. Eventually, I did hear from and speak with the Secretary. Nevertheless, the economic and environmental study referred to at the hearing last year was delivered just late yesterday, clearly in response to this hearing today and to the letter which Delegate Norton and I sent to Secretary Peña on May 29, 1996, insisting on the release of the study. I am relieved to finally have this vital information available to the District, Congress, and the public. I remain disappointed in the length of time this study was withheld, and in the efforts that we had to go to in order to secure its release. Since it was not possible to fully evaluate and absorb the study in one evening, our ability to discuss it today is severely limited. Therefore, it is my intention to hold another hearing on this issue after I have had an opportunity to review the study.

I am disappointed that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has declined my invitation to testify today. I believe that the Federal Government needs a comprehensive policy towards the District that will "hold harmless" the District for purely federal actions—which these closing clearly were—particularly considering the size of the negative impacts found by the Barton-Aschman study. At this point—one full year after the closings—there seems to be no coherent policy established by this Administration on this question. Congress can hardly be expected to work alone to help the District as we have so far been left to do. I expected more from the Administration and I will continue to seek more. In the meantime I will deal with the officials who are allowed to appear before the Subcommittee within their areas of activity.

It is not generally known, but a provision in the new Anti-Terrorism Act has a direct bearing on the issues we are dealing with concerning Pennsylvania Avenue. Section 803 of the Act gives the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury power to prohibit parking or business adjacent to any building or property used by law enforcement and subject to their jurisdiction. Report language requires the Attorney General and the Secretary to consult and coordinate with the District. This vastly increases the magnitude of the impact on the District of the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. Congress is entitled to answers from the Federal government as to their specific plans, whether or not there are viable alternatives, how the lost revenue will be compensated, and whether other significant responses such as public parking garages may be necessary.

This hearing will not deal directly with the \$40 million Design Project for Pennsylvania Avenue concocted and promoted by the National Park Service at the request of the White House. However, as stated in the letter to Secretary Peña on May 29, 1996, that Project is nothing more than a preposterous and extravagant bureaucratic monstrosity. In that letter, we stated that the Project was "a case of bureaucracy run amok." After I, with Delegate Norton's support, approached Congressman Regula, Chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, on this issue, he decided to include a provision in his bill to prohibit the Park Service from spending any funds, public or private, on permanent changes to Pennsylvania Avenue. I thank him for that action and I applaud his efforts to preserve "America's Main Street." I will work tirelessly to ensure that language stays in the Interior Appropriations bill.

I do want to emphasize that the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is clearly a regional issue. This is so, not only because of mutual concern about traffic and a healthy economy, but because of the environmental impact as well. The District is part of a region-wide serious ozone nonattainment area. Communication with the Council of Governments confirms my own belief that the gridlock created by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has an adverse impact on air quality. The air pollution impact provides added significance to our hearing. All regional jurisdictions, not

just the District, are compelled by federal law to take actions that would bring the Washington Metropolitan Area into compliance with the Clean Air Act. These actions may be made more onerous by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue.

In conclusion, it is my position that the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue is temporary, and that we must begin working towards its eventual reopening. In the meantime, the Federal Government has a responsibility to the District of Columbia to help it plan, implement, and pay for the serious impacts of these federal actions.

Mr. DAVIS. Mrs. Norton having not yet arrived, I am going to recognize our two distinguished first panelists this morning, Senator Rod Grams of Minnesota and Congressman James P. Moran from my neighboring district, the Eighth District of Virginia.

Senator Grams, we call on you first, being from the other body. I am aware of your interest in this matter and appreciate your making the effort to be here with us today. You don't need to be sworn.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROD GRAMS, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

Senator GRAMS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you and commend you for your leadership in calling this hearing this morning.

As you know, for more than a year the people of the District of Columbia have been pleading with the Clinton administration to hear them on this important issue only to be met with silence. They are fortunate that this committee understands the gravity of the situation and is offering them a voice today.

Many different opinions and viewpoints will be aired here this morning, but two facts are indisputable. Fact No. 1: One year ago an order from President Clinton to the Treasury Department closed a two-block segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House to vehicular traffic. Fact No. 2: That unilateral closing of a major artery that traverses one of the busiest sections of one of the busiest cities in the world has had a devastating impact on the District of Columbia.

Mr. Chairman, I admit that I join you as a relative newcomer to Washington. I know that you will take testimony this morning from experts with the technical knowledge that far surpasses mine on the damage done by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue to those who call the District home or earn their living here or do business within these borders or come here as visitors to the Nation's Capital. I won't try to speak for them; you will hear their stories later this morning.

I want to speak for the rest of America, because the transformation of this section of Pennsylvania Avenue from a national symbol of freedom to a testament to terrorism is something that average Americans tell me they cannot understand.

Because the need to ensure the safety and security of the President of the United States is paramount there was little argument when the avenue was closed in the weeks immediately following the bombing of the Federal building in Oklahoma City. Temporary restrictions on Pennsylvania Avenue seemed prudent. But months passed, and then a year, and now, the National Park Service is moving ahead with plans to forever close "America's Main Street" to traffic in front of the White House.

When did this Nation decide that caving in to fear by erecting more walls is an appropriate response in a free and open society?

For months around the White House, jersey barriers have been more plentiful than American flags. In a city that is home to such magnificent symbols of freedom as the great dome of the U.S. Capitol, the marble of the Lincoln Memorial, the stately columns and porticos of the White House, and the massive stones that lift the Washington Monument into the sky, the gray concrete barricades of Pennsylvania Avenue are a national embarrassment.

How do we explain the blockades to the visitors whose first glimpse of the home of their President is marred by the sight of a White House seemingly under siege? What do we say to those visitors' children, who have been taught how this Nation has fought for its freedom, something that we value above all else, and yet find a different message along the now empty stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue?

Everything I believe about America tells me that we are not a Nation that locks its doors, shutters its windows, and dims the light when confronted by fear. Our national history dictates that we face it down and move on.

Turning those two blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue into a \$40 million park won't hide the fact that we are wrapping the White House in another layer of protection and further insulating our leaders from the public. Turning those concrete barricades into planters and disguising them with flowers won't erase the knowledge that somewhere among all those overgrown flowerpots used to run one of Washington's most important streets.

Besides, nothing we've done will keep away a determined terrorist, so if we really want to protect the President, we won't stop with a few concrete blockades; we'll dig up Pennsylvania Avenue, fill it with water and maybe a few imported alligators and ring it with guards clad in armor and brandishing spears. The home of the President will be secure. It would be secure enough for a king. But kings live in castles, Mr. Chairman, Presidents do not.

The question is, Where will it stop? How far must we remove the people from their government before the people and their government are no longer one and the same?

Mr. Chairman, I say it stops today. Pennsylvania Avenue was closed by a Presidential order. It can be reopened by one as well. As you know, I've introduced a resolution in the Senate calling on the President to order the Secret Service, working alongside the Treasury Department and the District government, to develop a plan for permanent reopening of the Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House; and I am proud to announce today that 46 of my Senate colleagues are cosponsoring the Pennsylvania Avenue resolution. These are Republicans and Democrats united not by party, but more by purpose.

I'm grateful that our efforts have had the support of the distinguished chairman and his colleague on this panel, Congresswoman Norton, and that we've been joined by Mayor Barry, the D.C. Council and a host of organizations representing every facet of this community.

If anyone understands the importance of preserving Pennsylvania Avenue's vital connection with the people, it is those Americans who have served as President and made their home in the Executive Mansion. As you know, this week two former residents of 1600

Pennsylvania Avenue spoke out against the closing. President Gerald Ford said, "There ought to be a better solution;" and President Jimmy Carter branded it as, "unnecessary and a mistake."

The American people agree, and I'm heartened by their support, because many, many of them have urged me to continue this campaign to restore Pennsylvania Avenue to its historic use. I wish I could share with you each one of the letters that I have received from military experts who tell me that the present closure would do nothing to blunt a terrorist attack, from former and even current White House employees who are ashamed of what Pennsylvania Avenue has become, from long-time residents and more recent transplants to the District. They've said it 100 different ways, but their message has always been the same, and that is, give us back Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mr. Chairman, through almost 200 years of this Nation's colorful history, Pennsylvania Avenue survived through assassinations, attempted assassinations, civil and world wars, other political unrest and events that have often led the United States to question what it means to live in a free society where risks are an inescapable part of our daily life; but unless we take action to have it reopened, the Pennsylvania Avenue we have known will not survive the Clinton Presidency.

Again, I thank you for holding this hearing, Mr. Chairman, and for inviting me to join you today. Thank you very much.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much, Senator. We appreciate your leadership on that issue. I know Ms. Norton joins me in continuing the struggle. We will keep the record open; if there are any of those letters that you would like to enter into the record, we will do that.

Senator GRAMS. Thank you very much.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Rod Grams follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ROD GRAMS, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

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Fact number one: one year ago, an order from President Clinton to the Treasury Department closed a two-block segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House to vehicular traffic.

Fact number two: that unilateral closing, of a major artery that traverses one of the busiest sections of one of the busiest cities in the world, has had a devastating impact on the District of Columbia.

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If anyone understands the importance of preserving Pennsylvania Avenue's vital connection with the people, it's those Americans who served as President and made their home in the Executive Mansion. This week, two former residents of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue spoke out against the closing. President Gerald Ford said, quote, "There ought to be a better solution." President Jimmy Carter branded it as, quote, "unnecessary and a mistake."

The American people agree, and I'm heartened by their support—many, many of them have urged me to continue this campaign to restore Pennsylvania Avenue to its historic use. I wish I could share each of their letters with you, from military experts who tell me the present closure would do nothing to blunt a terrorist attack, from former—even current—White House employees who are ashamed of what Pennsylvania Avenue has become, from long-time residents and more recent transplants to the District. They've said it a hundred different ways, but their message is the same: give us back Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mr. Chairman, through almost 200 years of this nation's colorful history, Pennsylvania Avenue survived—through assassinations, civil and world wars, political unrest, and events that have often led us to question what it means to live in a free society where risks are an inescapable part of our daily life. But unless we take action to have it reopened, the Pennsylvania Avenue we have known will not survive the Clinton Presidency.

Again, I thank you for holding this hearing, Mr. Chairman, and for inviting me to join you today.

Mr. DAVIS. I now recognize my friend and colleague from the Eighth District of Virginia, Representative Jim Moran.

Welcome.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES P. MORAN, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA**

Mr. MORAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate you having this hearing today. It is an important issue. And the point that we need to make is that Pennsylvania Avenue should be reopened to the public.

I don't think there is any question about it. Some of us have tried to keep our mouths shut for a while, figuring that the administration was going to exercise some common sense and eventually open the thing, but it seems to be going in the wrong direction to be putting a park in front of the White House.

You know, I don't blame the Secret Service and the other security agencies. They are all good people. They want to do the right thing, but their focus is on security. That's really all they are thinking about. So if your focus is only on security, you are bound to overreact in situations like Oklahoma City. But we need to show some balance. We need to look at other considerations.

To put this in historical perspective, to put it in the context that Senator Grams is referring to, we have a gross overreaction in closing down Pennsylvania Avenue; and it's not the only example of this kind of overreaction to the Oklahoma City bombing.

We've got a new courthouse in Alexandria. It cost an enormous amount of money. We put in 500 underground parking spaces that the American taxpayers paid dearly for, and a substantial number of them were supposed to be available to the public—to people who need to do their jury duty, to people who need to testify as witnesses or defendants or accusers or whatever in their court system.

And do you know, the public isn't even allowed into this courthouse. Some of them have to park a half a mile away to walk to their courthouse that their money paid for.

We have lost sight of our priorities here.

The fact that, you know, this is very much a democratic people's government. You go into communist countries, and you see whole streets blocked off and people living in palatial mansions; and they don't want the people to see how well they live, to see the contrast. And then you come back to the United States, and it is so refreshing to realize that the people are governed by individuals who respect their access, who respect that this is still the same kind of government that our Founding Fathers envisioned.

And, they envisioned having the inaugural parade forever going in front of the White House. They—there has always been, even when we didn't have automobiles, we had carriages and so on, you see pictures in front of the White House. We should not today, just as we move into the 21st century, change this kind of history, reflecting this type of defensive overreaction that is completely contrary to what this government is all about.

And I know it is not what President Clinton wants. Heck, he goes jogging up to McDonald's. This is not his way of doing things, to close down Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

Let me get back on track here. That certainly wasn't in my prepared remarks.

Mr. DAVIS. But that will be your quote.

Mr. MORAN. I know. It's true, though. He feels umbrage over the fact that he can't jog over in the street; he has to jog around his backyard at the White House. That is not the way he wants to be doing things—none of our Presidential candidates.

We have a structure set up that has overemphasized security. Our security would be a lot better off if some of our colleagues would drop the extremist rhetoric and try to heal some of the divisions of this country. It would sure contribute a lot more to the security of our country.

I don't know the full economic ramifications of the decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue. I do know some of its impact on transportation. You know, there are approximately 20,000 vehicles that used to cross in front of the White House every day. That is 7.3 million vehicles annually. They carry residents, they carry commuters, and particularly, they carry tourists and all kinds of commerce. Now all of them have to find some alternative way across town.

And I know you are hearing from your constituents; I am hearing from my constituents. Eleanor is hearing from her constituents. We should all be hearing from our constituents. They should all feel outraged at this, except for a few of those in-line skaters that can still get access to it, but it is going too far.

The backups on the Roosevelt Bridge, every day since it was closed on May 19, have been awful. And from the D.C. government's perspective—we give so much flack to the District, and I have to say some of it is merited, but when we have an opportunity to be fair about this, they are suffering. These local businesses and shops, it's not just inconvenience; some of them are going out of business. All of them have a much higher cost of doing business because of what the Federal Government has done to them.

People that own property can't lease that property because they don't have access to parking. All the traffic has to find a way around the barricades. We've got these local delivery trucks that have to park in the middle of the street. They block up traffic. I know, particularly this morning, you are aware of what that can do. One automobile that doesn't know where they are supposed to be can block up people for half an hour.

Restaurants and merchants, you go down the list, and it is not fair to any of them. They should all be compensated, and not just the private sector; the public sector and the D.C. government should be compensated for the loss of this revenue.

The Federal Highway Administration has done a study. I know it confirms the adverse impact of closing Pennsylvania Avenue. That study should be made public.

Unless a compelling case can be made to keep the barricades, they should come down. There are a lot less intrusive security measures that could be used if we asked our friends in the Secret Service and all to come up with some more innovative ideas.

If the District claimed eminent domain and destroyed homes to widen a city road, they would have a legal obligation to compensate the homeowners. We have some legal obligation to compensate the people that have paid such a high cost for this. It is time to stop

the cost that they are paying and to put some common sense into this issue.

I testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation on the need to provide the District with funding to at least conduct a full traffic management study, that would be public, to accommodate the traffic diverted as a result of this closing. We should certainly pay for that study. It is a minimum of what the Federal Government can do to compensate the District.

I think there is a lot more that the Federal Government can and should do to compensate the District, and the way to start is to start today to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue, to put some common sense into this, and to give our government back to the people. Thank you.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Hon. James P. Moran follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES P. MORAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the issues of importance to the District of Columbia and commuters from my congressional district; the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue around the White House.

I believe Pennsylvania Avenue should be reopened to the public. I think a number of federal agencies responsible for public safety, the Secret Service included, may have overreacted to the tragedy in Oklahoma City last spring. Restricting public access to government buildings and closing off Pennsylvania Avenue to automobile traffic run counter to our democratic principles and our tradition of giving the people easy access to the instruments of their government.

We have a new courthouse in Alexandria that has 500 underground parking spaces, more than 100 spaces were to have been made available to the public. Following the Oklahoma City bombing, the public must find parking on side streets and walk up to one-half a mile to fulfill their civic obligations to serve on a jury or pursue their right to have their day in court. I understand, that in a number of federal buildings around the country, the General Services Administration has proposed using the vacant public parking spaces as temporary warehouse space since the public may no longer use them.

While I do not know the full economic ramifications of the decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue, I am familiar with its impact on transportation. Before Washington's "main street" was closed to traffic approximately 20,000 vehicles crossed in front of the White House on a daily basis. That is 7.3 million vehicles annually, carrying residents, commuters, tourists and commerce, must find an alternative way across town. I continue to hear regularly from my constituents who must find alternative ways to get to work. Backups on the Roosevelt Bridge, has increased significantly since May 19, 1995, the day the Avenue was closed.

From the District of Columbia's perspective, the impact has been even more severe. Local businesses and shops along Pennsylvania Avenue have suffered inconvenience and a higher cost of doing business. Some businesses have been unable to lease office space because they can no longer offer parking and convenient front door access. Adjacent streets have been overloaded with traffic searching for a way around the barricades. Sometimes, the traffic becomes a nightmare of gridlock as local delivery trucks on the adjacent four-lane streets must block a full lane of traffic while they are forced to walk their packages an unnecessary extra block. Restaurants and merchants have seen a drop in business because customers can no longer negotiate the traffic or find a convenient place to park.

It is my understanding that the Federal Highway Administration is in possession of a study that may confirm the adverse impact the closing has had on traffic and economic activity in and around Pennsylvania Avenue. This study should be made public.

Unless a compelling case can be made to keep the barricades, they should come down. I suspect some less intrusive security measures could be implemented that would not have as devastating an impact on White House's neighbors. If the barricades must stay, the federal government has an obligation to make the District whole. If the District were to claim eminent domain and destroy homes to widen

a city road, they would have a legal obligation to compensate the homeowners. Does not the District have the same right to compensation for the economic and transportation costs it has incurred with the closing of one of its main streets?

Earlier this year, I testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation on the need to provide the District with funding to conduct a traffic management study on ways to accommodate traffic diverted as a result of the Pennsylvania Avenue closing. Support for this study should be viewed as a minimum of what the federal government should be obligated to compensate for taking this land from the District.

Thank you.

Mr. DAVIS. Let me just ask a couple of questions, and then I will yield to my ranking member.

Senator Grams, let me start with you. If legitimate security concerns should be addressed at the White House, would you be willing to examine alternatives and support funding for those alternatives as necessary?

Senator GRAMS. Yes; because I think to provide the security for the President should be one of our utmost concerns. But then again, the knee-jerk reaction to the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue—and as I mentioned, it was probably prudent at the time to do a temporary closure, to stand back and to evaluate and assess what was going on. But it was kind of an arrogant move on behalf of those involved, to close off the Avenue without any input from the District, without any public hearings that were held; and now when it comes time to make a decision on the future of Pennsylvania Avenue, their alternative, as Congressman Moran said, is to come up with a park without any other alternatives. Now they want input on what the park should look like.

So I think we should sit down and reopen Pennsylvania Avenue, first and foremost, and then to sit and look at different ways and study how can we provide adequate security. In a democracy, we always have some share of risks; we are never going to be 100 percent sure. But the Secret Service has done a great job, and I think we can do a good job without this type of action.

Mr. DAVIS. It looks like the airplanes were more of a problem than cars.

Senator GRAMS. And closing off the Avenue would not have stopped some of those incidents that have been quoted.

Mr. DAVIS. I always thought that closing off the Avenue was easy because it looked like it was free, but it wasn't free, whether you pay the District of Columbia for the impact or pay for other measures that we are obligated to pay. Do you both agree with that?

Senator GRAMS. Right.

Mr. MORAN. Absolutely.

You know, Tom, I really think there is more to this than just Pennsylvania Avenue, because Pennsylvania Avenue is the most obvious example. We've got GSA converting very expensive parking spaces to warehouse space in public parking garages because the public isn't allowed access to it. But this is the most notable example, and we ought to set a standard here. We ought to put some common sense into some legislation or at least an agreement with the administration to fix this. And then I think we have to look at some of the other knee-jerk overreactions that have occurred throughout the country with Federal buildings.

Mr. DAVIS. Let me just throw out a concept, and this is kind of off the top of my head, but if you go under the prospect here that

the city, with its other financial concerns, should be held harmless for any decision that goes on from this Federal action—at least until we can look at it a little further—then the city should be reimbursed for some of the costs that this has cost, and that would include the businesses and revenue and those kinds of things; and then you could always take that out of the Secret Service budget, executive, then I think you would get a different priority decision.

Mrs. Norton and I have so far persuaded Mr. Regula to put language into the Interior Appropriations bill that no money, private or public, is going to be spent on a very permanent closing at this point; but I think we need to go further. There is a cost to this. If the Secret Service and the executive branch feel so strongly about this, let them pay for it out of their budgeted appropriations, and then we will know if it really meets the sniff test and it isn't just a free shot.

Senator GRAMS. I agree. Because it is easy to do something with somebody else's money, or to close off a street that doesn't bother you as much if you don't live there or work there.

I got interested, when Congressman Moran and you, Mr. Chairman, were talking about your constituents and the complaints that you heard. And people ask, how did I get involved? Thousands of Minnesotans visit Washington every year, and they are the ones who really started talking about this with me. They said it looked more like Tiananmen Square or Red Square than a free democracy.

But I've talked with Mayor Barry and the Council, and they have documented now, running into the millions of dollars, what the city has lost. So if we can document some of those losses and then say who is going to compensate or pay for those, and then as you have suggested, turn to those budgets who are asking for this to be done, maybe we would get a different reaction from them.

Mr. DAVIS. And if they still feel it is a priority, then they would be able to fund it.

Senator GRAMS. But they should hold public hearings and let the public have a voice in what is going on rather than this arrogant imposing—this edict onto the city. And I think there is a law, if I am not mistaken, that was passed in the early 1980's that said, before the Federal Government could close off permanently any street in the District that it would have to hold hearings with the District government and public hearings. Now, if that is true, then that has not been done.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you.

Let me yield now to my colleague from the District of Columbia, the ranking member, Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. First, I apologize to Senator Grams for missing his testimony. I certainly will read it. I want to thank both members—

Mr. DAVIS. I thought you wrote it by the way it came out.

Ms. NORTON. No; actually it probably could have been written by the majority of Members of the House and Senate, frankly. The way in which this matter has been handled by the Secret Service and the Park Service, by the Treasury Department and the Park Service, has been a serious miscalculation and a serious disservice to the administration that they serve.

The disservice to this city is completely outrageous, and that this matter has attracted Members from outside of the region, I think speaks to that point.

I have no questions for my colleagues. I will assume, Senator Grams, that when the prohibition of private and public funds comes from the House to the Senate, that we may count upon your help to make sure that that is placed in the bills of both Houses.

Senator GRAMS. I intend to do that. We are going to hopefully get a vote on a resolution, and then the next step would be to do what you have done in the House, and that is to deny funding for this project.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you both very much. I think it shows the bipartisan nature of the concern. And we appreciate both of your testimonies. Thank you very much.

Ms. Norton, if you would like to make an opening statement at this point, we would be happy to have it.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank Chairman Tom Davis for convening this very important hearing.

Closing Pennsylvania Avenue will probably turn out to have been an understandable overreaction when considered in the context of the tragic, ghastly, and unprecedented Oklahoma bombing. However, the actions of the Park Service and the Secret Service in moving to close this major historic artery permanently is a brazen, unnecessary, cruel stab in the gut of a defenseless, insolvent city. Fortunately for the city, there is bipartisan agreement at least on the proposition that Pennsylvania Avenue will not be permanently closed for a grand total of \$40 million or for any amount.

Immediately after the closing last May, I asked Chairman Davis if he would convene a hearing. He did so not only because he genuinely cared about the injury to the District, the chairman also recognized that major damage has been done to the entire region.

The rush-hour nightmare that ensnares traffic has had a far greater effect on regional residents than on D.C. residents. Federal employees and most others who use our downtown streets come largely from the region, and the streets leading into and away from Pennsylvania Avenue are the arteries that they use.

The injury to the District, of course, includes crippling traffic disabilities to the public but goes well beyond that. Closing down Pennsylvania Avenue is like closing down 59th Street in Manhattan or 125th Street in Harlem. It cannot be done without severing and wrecking the city.

Pennsylvania Avenue, like those other famous cross streets, was strategically placed to ensure that the city did not suffer from the bifurcation that guarantees disunity, dysfunction, and dissolution. The trauma is most severe when a crosstown artery is taken out. Business, property values, traffic, and tourism, the vital signs of this city's life, weaken and disappear. It would be unthinkable to scar the life of any great city this way. It is brutally unfair to take such a last-resort step unless we are at our last resort.

This might be the case, for example, if we were at war. So far, the only war has been the war the Secret Service declared on this city, taking no prisoners, when it closed down Pennsylvania Ave-

nue on May 19, 1995. Also, the closing inflicted a crippling body blow to the city and is absolutely antithetical to our national traditions.

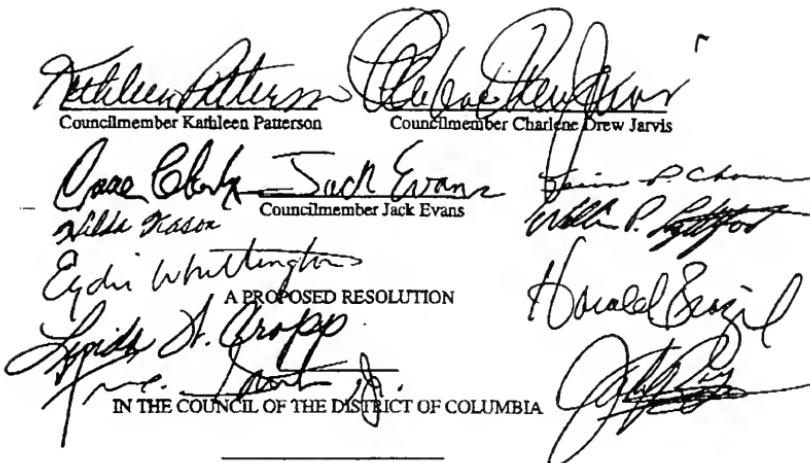
Few called for an immediate reopening in the wake of the Oklahoma bombing. Now, largely because of the way this issue has been mishandled, there is a virtual chorus here and in the city for reopening.

May I ask unanimous consent to place in the record a resolution of the D.C. City Council, that appears to be unanimous, asking Congress to enact legislation to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue?

Mr. DAVIS. Without objection.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The information referred to follows:]



 Kathleen Patterson Charles Drew Jarvis
 Councilmember Kathleen Patterson Councilmember Charles Drew Jarvis
Jack Evans John Scanlon
 Councilmember Jack Evans John Scanlon
Mike Nason Mark P. Loeffler
Edie Whittington Donald Beigil
Lynne St. Croix John D. C. Parker
Frederick L. Gray
 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare, on an emergency basis, the sense of the Council to request Congress to enact legislation to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

That this resolution may be cited as the "Sense of the Council Pennsylvania Avenue Reopening Emergency Resolution of 1996".

Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

- (1) One year ago the United States Department of the Treasury closed Pennsylvania Avenue, the national symbol of an open democracy.
- (2) The National Park Service has submitted a proposal to permanently close Pennsylvania Avenue, leaving the downtown disfigured and dysfunctional.
- (3) Pennsylvania Avenue is the major east-west artery in the District of Columbia.
- (4) The temporary closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has seriously affected the ability of District residents to navigate city streets and has greatly disrupted traffic patterns,

commerce and tourism.

(5) The permanent closure of Pennsylvania Avenue will exacerbate the serious financial and traffic problems that have been created by the temporary closure.

(6) Pennsylvania Avenue is not a park.

(7) The concern for heightened security is understandable. Nevertheless, with the technological capability of the United States, another solution can be found to address security interests without permanently damaging the District of Columbia.

(8) In this time of fiscal austerity at the local and national levels, it is neither desirable nor justifiable to spend the amounts proposed to permanently alter Pennsylvania Avenue.

(9) The proposal submitted by the National Park Service does not address the impact the closure will have on the residents and businesses of the District of Columbia.

(10) The future of Pennsylvania Avenue should be decided with the cooperation and approval of the elected officials and citizens of the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that the United States Congress enact legislation requiring the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Sec. 4. The Secretary of the Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit copies of this resolution upon its adoption to the President of the United States, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Delegate to the United States Congress, the chairpersons of the committees of the United States Congress with oversight and budgetary jurisdiction over the District of Columbia, the Chair of the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority, the Secretary of the United States Department of the Treasury, the Secretary of the United States General Services Administration, the Secretary of the

United States Department of Transportation, the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, the Chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission, the City Administrator, the Assistant City Administrator for Economic Development, the Director of the District of Columbia Department of Public Works, and the Director of the District of Columbia Office of Planning.

Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Ms. NORTON. At this time, Chairman Davis and I have not called for an immediate reopening. I have emphatically opposed the permanent closing guaranteed by the Park Service plans and, working with Chairman Davis and other colleagues, have now assured that the so-called preferred plan of the Park Service meets the fate preferred for it by Members of Congress.

Before making a judgment that the Avenue should immediately be opened, however, it seemed to me that a hearing where all options were explored and where the Secret Service had an opportunity to make its case was the fair way to proceed. Fairness to the District and the region, however, has apparently not crossed the mind of the Secret Service or the Park Service. The escalating calls for reopening Pennsylvania Avenue must be laid squarely at their feet based on how they have handled this matter.

The calls to reopen escalated and in some cases became politicized only after the Park Service insisted on proceeding to work on a \$40 million plan that guaranteed permanent closing. Anyone who lives in the real world knows that the Federal Government would never spend money to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue once it has spent \$40 million to make it into a park. Fortunately, neither expenditure will be necessary.

One thing is certain. It does not take much knowledge or imagination to predict that technology will soon reach the point where neither moats nor closings will be necessary to protect official buildings.

The heartless way in which this city has been treated throughout this costly and mishandled episode betrays any feeling for the half million people I represent and the millions of commuters who depend on this major thoroughfare. Almost no attempt has been made to soften the blow, except for some very-short-term help with pay for police to direct traffic, and even that did not last long.

Loss of revenue to an already bankrupt city, loss of productivity to the Federal Government itself, incalculable losses to business and individuals, losses in much-needed air quality improvement, all have simply not been on the tables of either the Secret Service or the Park Service. However, these issues are very much on the table of the House and the Senate.

It is time that the troubling standoff between necessary White House security and the essential life of a great city were settled intelligently and amicably. If we do not work together, they will be settled in far less desirable ways. The prohibition of the use of private and public funds already assured, in lawsuits that I will assure you will follow, and in polarization between the administration and the city and region of which it is a part. With some sensitivity, intelligence, and problem solving, the sad and shameful Pennsylvania Avenue debacle could have been avoided.

In a democracy, the reaction to the closing was predictable. What was entirely unpredicted was that the Secret Service and the Park Service would proceed arrogantly as if this were a garrison state and this city existed only to serve the purposes of that state. May today's hearing mark the beginning of more thoughtful action to try to undo the budget.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

I am now pleased to introduce and welcome our second panel of witnesses: Mr. James Johnson, the Assistant Secretary for Enforcement, Department of the Treasury; and Mr. Eljay Bowron, Director of the U.S. Secret Service.

This is the first time we have been honored to have your testimony before this subcommittee. As I wrote to you in my letter inviting you to testify, your testimony has been specifically requested by the ranking minority member, Delegate Norton, and I was pleased to comply with that request, and I am sure you are pleased to be here this morning.

I am sure that you have been advised that it is the policy of this committee that all witnesses be sworn before they may testify. Would you rise and raise your right hand?

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. DAVIS. The subcommittee will carefully review any written statements you care to submit. As you have been informed, I ask that your oral presentations be no more than 10 minutes. We will hear first from Mr. Johnson, followed by Mr. Bowron.

STATEMENTS OF JAMES JOHNSON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ENFORCEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY; AND ELJAY BOWRON, DIRECTOR, U.S. SECRET SERVICE

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Chairman, thank you, and thank you, members of the subcommittee, for the opportunity to appear here today.

We are here to discuss the decision made a year ago to close part of Pennsylvania Avenue to cars, to trucks, and buses, but to not people. Given the risks, given the stakes, the decision to close part of the Avenue was the right decision. Secretary Rubin, the Department of Treasury, and the U.S. Secret Service remain fully committed to that decision today.

Before I go further, I'd like to make one note. We will be as informative as possible addressing the law enforcement and security matters that reflect to restricting motor vehicles from their access to a portion of Pennsylvania Avenue, but I must point out that there are sensitive issues about White House security that we cannot discuss in this forum. We will be happy, however, to brief you on these issues during a classified, executive session.

Secretary Rubin has the statutory duty and the responsibility to protect the President and the White House. After a searching 8-month review, not a knee-jerk reaction, he exercised his authority and ordered the Secret Service to prohibit vehicular traffic on sections of Pennsylvania Avenue, on South Executive Avenue, and on State Place.

The basis for the Secretary's directive was a finding of the White House Security Review that—and I will quote from the review itself—there is no alternative to prohibiting vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue that would ensure the safety of the President, and others in the White House complex, from explosive devices carried by vehicles near its boundaries.

Over an 8-month period, the White House Security Review evaluated the overall security of the White House complex. The review focused on an important goal, of protecting the President and the First Family and the employees and the numerous visitors and tourists while they are in the White House complex. The review

was fully aware of the importance of preserving the welcoming environment of this national treasure, the White House.

And I am new to Treasury within the last couple of months, but I served and was honored to serve as a member of that review, and I can assure you that these concerns were very seriously taken. At the end of this review, the review concluded that it has no choice other than to recommend closing part of the Avenue to cars, to trucks, and to buses.

The review was overseen by an independent, nonpartisan advisory committee which was composed of six distinguished Americans. This panel examined the method and findings of the review, and it, too, unanimously agreed that the facts compelled only one recommendation, that motor vehicle access to Pennsylvania Avenue must be restricted in order to preserve the security and public accessibility of the White House.

Faced with this overwhelming information, it is my understanding that the President reluctantly agreed to the Secretary's recommendation.

And I would also like to talk briefly about the background of the review. The review was established by Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen in September 1994 following the crash of a small plane into the south grounds of the White House. Secretary Bentsen directed then Under Secretary Ronald Noble and Secret Service Director Eljay Bowron to conduct an investigation so exhaustive in its sweep that it would leave no stone unturned.

The review examined the plane crash as well as a number of other incidents, including the October 29, 1994, shooting on the north grounds of the White House. In addition, the review examined the danger posed to the White House complex by either air assault or ground assault.

Secretary Bentsen appointed a nonpartisan advisory committee composed of six distinguished Americans to assure that the review's work was thorough and unbiased. I would like to name these advisors. Robert Carswell, former Deputy Secretary of the Treasury; William Coleman, former Secretary of Transportation; Charles Duncan, former Secretary of Energy; and Deputy Secretary of Defense, General David Jones, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Dr. Judith Rodin, president of the University of Pennsylvania; and Judge William Webster, former Director of the CIA and former Director of the FBI.

The members of the advisory committee, with their diverse background, brought expertise and critical insight into the work of the reviews. Furthermore, the advisory committee was asked and they complied with this request—they were asked to evaluate the review on behalf of the group most interested in balancing the security and accessibility of the White House complex. That group is the American people.

Oversight of the method and conduct of the review was also provided by the Department of Treasury's Office of the Inspector General.

This review was the most comprehensive analysis of White House security ever conducted. Experts from eight foreign countries were consulted, and three former Presidents were interviewed to bring additional perspective to the review.

The review interviewed or received briefings from more than 300 people from at least 10 Government agencies and analyzed more than 1,000 documents. We also consulted more than 20 technical and public access experts. In the end, we produced both a public report and a classified report of more than 500 pages.

I'd like to talk about the threat. None of us will ever forget the physical destruction caused by the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City and the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma. We must never forget the massive loss of life and injuries suffered in those attacks.

The enduring image of the Oklahoma City Murrah Building is one of a single building with its side, its centers, torn out by a bomb. But what is not well discussed or as widely known is that that bomb also destroyed 300 other buildings. There were also at least 10 other collapsed structures. All of this occurred within a 5-block radius of the Murrah Building.

We know bombs destroy lives, they destroy buildings; they also have tremendous economic impact. The economic impact of the blast on Oklahoma City exceeds \$400 million. If you include the Federal Government's losses, the total loss approaches \$700 million. Seven thousand residents of Oklahoma City were left without a workplace, and almost 500 were left without homes.

As Director Bowron will confirm in a few moments, there are still individuals here in the United States who would target our workplaces or national symbols or symbols such as the White House. We are well aware of their ability to inflict catastrophic damage.

Although I can't discuss in this forum specific sensitive information which led the review to recommend keeping cars, trucks, and buses from in front of the White House, I can direct you to publicly available information that illustrates the nature and the extent of the threat.

Many of you will recall that within the last few months 10 terrorists were convicted in New York for planning a campaign of urban terrorism. They were led by Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahkman. The sheik was recorded in one of his speeches stating what his goal was, and what I would like to do is read his words.

His goal was to destroy his enemies, and he said,

By means of destroying and exploding the structure of their civilized pillars, such as the touristic infrastructure which they are proud of, and their high world buildings which they have, the statues which they endear, and the buildings in which gather their leaders.

In short, the threat is real. We can all imagine the devastating effect that an Oklahoma City-like blast would have on and around the White House. Since May 1995, almost 800,000 visitors have toured the White House, an average of more than 2,000 visitors a day.

This number does not include the foreign dignitaries that go there, the workers, the official visitors that go to the White House, and it also does not include the countless men, women, and children who stroll the public areas immediately adjacent to the White House grounds each year.

Having identified the threat we had, it was our responsibility to determine what to do, and for security reasons we could not seek a full public debate on this issue about vulnerabilities to the White

House, about potential security enhancements, or about even the issue of restricting motor vehicle access to Pennsylvania Avenue. But what we did was, in our view, the next best thing.

The review fully investigated the historical significance of Pennsylvania Avenue to the District of Columbia and the Presidential Park. To ensure that those concerns were properly addressed, we consulted architects, landscape, and urban design planners. Each of the experts agreed that public access would be enhanced through strategic planning. Each endorsed the notion of converting the avenue into a pedestrian mall.

A year ago, thousands visited the White House every day. Today, thousands still come to the White House. There simply is no traffic.

Furthermore, the review recognized that the citizens who live and work within this District have a unique and important stake in the White House and clearly in its surrounding streets. To ensure that the review considered their concerns, we met with numerous people prior to the Secretary's order to address these issues. To name just a handful, we consulted members of the Bloomingdale Civic Association; representatives from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Association of the District of Columbia Civic Associations; the general manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority; engineering representatives from the District of Columbia Department of Public Works; the director of the Department of Public Works; Chief Fred Thomas of the Metropolitan Police Department; the executive director and the chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission; the transportation planner George Jacquemart, a transportation planner and traffic engineer; and members of the comprehensive design plan for the White House. In addition, Robert L. Morris, a consultant in traffic and transportation, conducted a study on the feasibility of rerouting traffic around the White House.

We sought the advice and the support of Congress regarding this important decision, and, prior to the Secretary's order, the review consulted with House and Senate leadership and with the appropriate committee members with oversight responsibilities for the Secret Service.

To continue this important discussion, the Secret Service met with members of this committee to discuss these issues, including you, Mr. Chairman, and you, Congresswoman Norton, Congressman Herr, Congressman Clinger, and Congressman Gutknecht.

One of the concerns raised in this discussion was the impact this decision would have on traffic. Those concerns have been raised repeatedly in the year since, and I understand that the Federal Highway Administration will testify later to address the traffic issues. We were mindful of these concerns before the recommendation to close Pennsylvania Avenue was made, and we consulted with a wide array of experts to consider alternatives.

The review retained 10 technical consultants to study options for improving security at the White House. The review, working with the Secret Service, the security consultants, and the advisory committee, carefully studied all potential alternatives short of closing the street to vehicular traffic. Indeed, a number of advisers were initially strongly opposed to closing Pennsylvania Avenue to traffic before we completed this review. But after hearing all of the tech-

nical evidence, the advisors unanimously concluded that none of the alternatives would provide the necessary protection.

I understand that the impact of the decision to restrict vehicular traffic from part of Pennsylvania Avenue is among a broad range of Federal District issues that are currently being considered by the President's Interagency Task Force on the District of Columbia.

The task force was created last year to develop options for executive branch agencies to assist the District, not to ignore the District or to harm the District, in its fiscal recovery efforts. I understand that the task force will review the impact of the decision to restrict traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue and determine what may be needed to mitigate that impact.

I would like to talk briefly, because I know I am running short of time, about the future of Pennsylvania Avenue. The facts that led to the recommendation to close Pennsylvania Avenue last year, facts about the threat, the facts about the vulnerability, facts about traffic as well, are facts that have remained the same and remain considerations. We do not see any of these factors changing in the foreseeable future. The threat is there today, and we see the threat to remain should Pennsylvania Avenue be reopened. The desire of persons to harm the White House was there a year ago, it is there today, and we believe that it will continue for the foreseeable future.

When this decision was made, the decision was the right one. Access for the public to the White House is still assured. I have been on Pennsylvania Avenue virtually every day this week and have seen children and schoolchildren visiting and continue to visit the White House, to see families walking down the middle of the avenue. The White House remains the people's house.

The White House now remains safe, secure so that the people may visit safely, the President may reside there safely, and that the particular threats that we were concerned with will be thwarted. Thank you.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Johnson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES JOHNSON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
ENFORCEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY

Mr. Chairman, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify today about the decision to protect the Presidency, the White House, visitors, dignitaries and pedestrians by restricting vehicular traffic from the segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House complex. As Treasury Assistant Secretary for Enforcement, I have oversight responsibility for the Treasury's Law Enforcement Bureaus, including the Customs Service, ATF, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and, of course, the United States Secret Service.

We will be as informative as possible in addressing the law enforcement and security matters that relate to the restricting of vehicular access to this portion of Pennsylvania Avenue. I must point out, however, that there are sensitive issues about White House security that we cannot discuss in this forum. We would be happy, however, to brief you on these issues during classified executive sessions.

Based upon his statutory authority, Secretary of the Treasury Rubin issued an order on May 19, 1995 directing the United States Secret Service to prohibit vehicular traffic on segments of Pennsylvania Avenue and South Executive Avenue, and on State Place. The basis for the Secretary's directive was the finding of the White House Security Review ("Review") that "There is no alternative to prohibiting vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue that would ensure the safety of the President and others in the White House complex from explosive devices carried by vehicles near its boundaries." That decision, which was made for security reasons and imple-

mented to protect public access to the White House, was correct one year ago. Secretary Rubin, the Department of the Treasury, and the United States Secret Service remain fully committed to that decision today.

Overview

Over an eight-month period, the White House Security Review evaluated the overall security of the White House complex. The review focused upon the important goal of protecting the President and the First Family, the employees and the numerous visitors and tourists while they are in and around the White House complex. The Review was fully aware of the importance of preserving the welcoming environment of this national treasure. Based upon the evidence they analyzed, the Review concluded that it had no recourse other than to recommend restricting vehicular access from the segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House complex. The Independent Nonpartisan Advisory Committee of the Review, composed of six distinguished Americans, scrutinized the methods and the conduct of the Review, and unanimously agreed that the facts compelled only one recommendation: vehicular access to Pennsylvania Avenue must be restricted in order to preserve the security and public accessibility of the White House. Faced with this overwhelming information, it is my understanding that the President reluctantly agreed to the secretary's recommendation.

Within the context of upholding our vital, statutorily-imposed duty to protect the President and the White House complex, maintaining public access was an important concern throughout the review. The review considered how the rerouting of traffic around the White House complex would affect the citizens who live and work within the District of Columbia. Prior to the announcement of this action, the review briefed key Members of Congress on the results of the White House security evaluation. The review offered to address the concerns of District of Columbia officials regarding traffic, among other issues.

Background on the White House security review

The review was established by Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen on September 12, 1994, following the crash of a small plane onto the south grounds of the White House. Secretary Bentsen directed then-Treasury Under Secretary Ronald K. Noble and Secret Service Director Eljay B. Bowron to conduct an investigation so exhaustive in its sweep that "no stone would be left unturned." Having served as an assistant director of the review, I know first hand the amount of work and careful analysis that culminated with this action.

The review examined the plane crash, as well as a number of other incidents, including the October 29, 1994 shooting on the north grounds of the White House. In addition, the review examined the dangers posed to the White House complex by either air or ground assault.

Secretary Bentsen appointed a nonpartisan advisory committee composed of six distinguished Americans to ensure that the review's work was thorough and unbiased. These advisors were Robert Carswell, former Deputy Secretary of the Treasury; William Coleman, former Secretary of Transportation; Charles Duncan, former Secretary of Energy and Deputy Secretary of Defense; General David Jones, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Dr. Judith Rodin, president of the University of Pennsylvania; and Judge William Webster, former Director of the CIA and the FBI. The members of the advisory committee, with their diverse backgrounds, brought expertise and critical insight to the work of the review. Furthermore, the advisory committee was asked to evaluate the review on behalf of the group most interested in balancing the security and accessibility of the White House complex—the American people.

Oversight of the method and conduct of the review also was provided by the Department of the Treasury's office of inspector general. The inspector general determined that the review was conducted in a thorough and impartial manner.

The review is the most comprehensive analysis of White House security ever conducted. Experts from eight foreign countries were consulted and three former Presidents were interviewed to bring additional perspective to the review. The review interviewed or received briefings from more than 300 individuals from at least 10 government agencies, and analyzed more than 1,000 documents. We also consulted more than 20 technical and public access experts. The review produced as classified report of more than 500 pages, as well as a public report.

The review retained 10 technical consultants to study options for improving the security of the White House. The review, working with the Secret Service, the security consultants, and the advisory committee, carefully studied all potential alternatives short of closing the street to vehicular traffic. Indeed, a number of the advisors were initially opposed to closing Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic. After

hearing all of the technical evidence, the advisors unanimously concluded that none of the alternatives would provide the necessary protection.

The threat

None of us will ever forget either the physical destruction caused by the bombings of the World Trade Center in New York City and the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, or the massive loss of life and injuries suffered in those attacks. In the Oklahoma City bombing, which occurred just a little over a year ago, over 300 buildings were damaged; there also were at least 10 collapsed structures. All of this occurred within a five-block radius of the Murrah building.

The economic impact of the blast on Oklahoma City exceeds \$400 million. If you include the Federal Government's losses, the total incident loss approaches \$700 million. Seven thousand residents of Oklahoma City were left without a workplace and almost five hundred were left homeless.

As Director Bowron will confirm in a few moments, there still are individuals here in the United States who would target our workplaces and national symbols such as the White House. We are well aware of their ability to inflict catastrophic damage. Although I cannot discuss in this forum the specific sensitive information that led the review to recommend prohibiting vehicular traffic on the segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, I can direct you to publicly available information that illustrates the extent of the threat.

For example—in a speech that was later introduced as evidence during his trial, Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahkman, leader of the group of New York City bombing conspirators who were convicted of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, said that his goal had been to destroy his enemies, ". . . by means of destroying and exploding the structure of their civilized pillars, such as the touristic infrastructure which they are proud of, and their high world buildings which they have their statutes which they endear, and the buildings in which gather their leaders."

In short, the threat is real. We can all imagine the devastating effect that an Oklahoma City-like blast would have on and around the White House. Since May 1995, almost 800,000 visitors have toured the White House, an average of 2,300 visitors each day. This number does not include, however, the foreign dignitaries and other official visitors to the White House. And it also does not include the countless men, women and children who stroll the public areas immediately adjacent to the White House grounds each year.

Having identified the threat, we then had to determine what to do.

Consultations

For security reasons, we could not seek a full public debate on this issue prior to restricting vehicular access to Pennsylvania Avenue. On the evening of May 19, 1995, the review consulted the President, who reluctantly provided final concurrence with Secretary Rubin's decision. We then immediately notified Mayor Barry, Council Chairman David Clarke, and you, Chairman Davis. The following week, we met with Mr. Clarke and members of the council of the District of Columbia, at which time we provided more detailed security information, and we had the opportunity to listen carefully to their concerns. That same week we met also with Mayor Barry and City Administrator Michael Rogers, and held a similar frank and open discussion of the issues. We then conducted further outreach by meeting with representatives from the Federal City Council, the D.C. Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Washington Board of Trade.

The review had already fully investigated the historical significance of Pennsylvania Avenue to the District of Columbia and the Presidential Park. To ensure that those concerns were properly addressed, the review consulted the following experts: Harold Adams, architect; Maxine Griffith, urban designer and member of the New York City Urban Planning Commission; Nicholas Quennell, landscape architect; William Seale, former White House historian; Vincent Scully, architectural historian; John Carl Warnecke, designer of the Lafayette Square Project for former First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis; George White, architect of the Capitol; and William Holingsworth Whyte, urban planner. Each of the experts agreed that public access would be enhanced through strategic planning.

Furthermore, the review recognized that the citizens who live and work within the District of Columbia have a unique and important stake in the White House and its surrounding streets. To ensure that the review considered their concerns, we met with numerous individuals prior to the Secretary's order to address these issues: members of the Bloomingdale Civic Association; Representatives from the United States Chamber of Commerce and the Association of D.C. Civic Associations; Lawrence Reuter, the General Manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA); Engineer Representatives from WMATA and the District

of Columbia Department of Public Works; Larry King, Director, Department of Public Works; Chief Fred Thomas, Metropolitan Police Department; Reginald Griffith, Executive Director and Harvey Gantt, Chairman, of the National Capital Planning Commission; Georges Jacquemart, Transportation Planner and Traffic Engineer; and Members of the Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House. In addition, Robert L. Morris, consultant in Traffic and Transportation, conducted a study on the feasibility of rerouting traffic around the White House.

In addition, the review sought the advice and support of Congress regarding this important decision. Prior to the Secretary's order, the review consulted with House and Senate leadership and with the appropriate committee members with oversight responsibility for the Secret Service. To continue this important discussion, the Secret Service met with members of this committee to discuss these issues, including you, Mr. Chairman, Congresswoman Norton, Congressman Herr, Congressman Clinger, and Congressman Gutknecht.

Legal authority

The Secretary's order was based on his authority under 18 U.S.C. section 3056 and related statutes, their legislative histories, and relevant court decisions. Legal opinions that discuss the secretary's authority were provided by Treasury's General Counsel and the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice. The lawyers from both departments concluded that 18 U.S.C. section 3056 grants to the Treasury secretary the board authority to take actions such as this one that are necessary and proper to protect the President.

The Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice stated in its opinion that "section 3056 grants the Secretary broad authority to take actions that are necessary and proper to protect the President. In light of the recommendations of the White House security review and the United States Secret Service's unique expertise and special responsibility in this matter, we agree with [the] conclusion that section 3056 authorizes the actions contemplated by the Secretary."

Public access considerations

The review was concerned not only with protecting the Presidency, but also with preserving the public's access to the White House despite the necessity of implementing additional security measures. For that reason, the review consulted a number of architects, historians, and urban planners who uniformly endorsed the idea of converting this stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue into a pedestrian mall. They consistently opined that a pedestrian plaza in front of the White House complex would enhance the public enjoyment of this national landmark by creating a friendlier, open environment. District of Columbia and national traffic experts consulted by the review confirmed that, with proper implementation, the adjacent thoroughfares would accommodate the diverted traffic.

Traffic issues

I understand that Federal Highway Administrator Slater will testify later today on issues relating to the rerouting of traffic from Pennsylvania in front of the White House. I would like to spend just a moment on the process we followed at Treasury to notify and work with District of Columbia entities as we moved toward implementing the Secretary's order.

Prior to restricting vehicular access to Pennsylvania Avenue, the Secret Service met with representatives from the District of Columbia Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to inform them that traffic rerouting was a distinct possibility. The Secret Service, DPW, and MPD constructed a short-term plan to manage traffic in the event the rerouting occurred. Afterward, the Treasury Department fully reimbursed the MPD for the costs it incurred in assigning officers to work overtime to direct traffic.

Immediately after the rerouting was made definite, the Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) joined in the traffic management efforts, offering the expertise of their engineers and resources to alleviate the economic impact on the city.

I understand that decisions regarding the impact of the restricting of vehicular traffic from the segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House in among a broad range of Federal/District issues that is being considered by the President's interagency task force on the District of Columbia. The task force was created last year to develop options for executive branch agencies to assist the district in its fiscal recovery efforts. I have been informed that the task force will review the impact of the Pennsylvania Avenue decision and determine what may be needed to mitigate its impact in the context of these and other issues. The Departments of Transportation and Treasury are currently active task force members, and I understand that GSA and Interior have participated in task force activities.

Treasury, with the assistance of the federal highway administration, is working to comply with all requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and has paid all costs associated with that endeavor. In addition, Treasury coordinated with the advisory council on historic preservation at the time of the secretary's order and continues to address historic preservation issues in connection with our NEPA work.

Pennsylvania Avenue in the future

As you may know, the process of planning the pedestrian plaza is being undertaken by agencies other than treasury. I will not comment on these areas except in the following terms.

I understand that the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service are spearheading the effort to develop both short- and long-term designs for that segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The National Park Service is now working with a preexisting group, the comprehensive design plan for the White House, to develop those plans.

I have been informed that on May 22, 1996, the Comprehensive Design Plan announced their design alternatives for Pennsylvania Avenue. I understand that design alternatives result from the collaborative efforts of several entities including Congress and District of Columbia officials.

I understand that the proposed pedestrian plaza will maintain the distinctively American access to our leaders who reside in the White House. Of all executive Mansions around the world that were studied, only at the White House is the public given access while the principal resident is there. The pedestrian plaza concept is consistent with L'Enfants' and President Washington's vision for the White House, and it is similar to an idea that president and Mrs. Kennedy endorsed a generation ago. At the same time, the plaza will significantly reduce the security risk posed to the White House and nearby areas by an explosive-laden vehicle.

We all believe that this effort will be to make the segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House a beautiful and inviting pedestrian area. Pennsylvania Avenue will continue to be the Site of the presidential Inaugural Parade; and emergency and official vehicles will continue to have access to this area. We will continue our efforts to coordinate with all interested parties to make the area beneficial to the President and the first family; to the cities of the District of Columbia and the Metropolitan Washington Area; and to all those who either visit or hope to visit the "People's House."

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Bowron.

Mr. BOWRON. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Representative Norton. On behalf of the Secret Service, I appreciate the opportunity to address this committee concerning the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic and the need for it to remain closed.

On May 20, 1995, Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin directed the Secret Service to prohibit unauthorized motor vehicle traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House and to close two streets on the southwest corner of the White House complex. The Secret Service remains steadfast in its belief that the threat to the White House complex by explosive-laden vehicles is genuine and that given the opportunity an attack will occur.

The decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue was, in part, based on the recommendation of the advisory committee of the White House Security Review, a nonpartisan, distinguished panel of experts, which Secretary Johnson has already outlined. The recommendation concerning Pennsylvania Avenue was the most controversial of the advisory committee's recommendations, but by no means was it a knee-jerk reaction. The recommendation was based on thorough technical analysis. Concerns about the vulnerability of the White House were heightened by the 1983 truck bombing of the U.S. Marine Barracks in Beirut and confirmed by the bombings of the World Trade Center in New York and the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

Immediately following the 1983 Beirut bombing, the Secret Service implemented countermeasures against a similar type of attack occurring at the White House. These countermeasures involved placing U.S. Park Service dump trucks filled with sand in front of the gates considered vulnerable. After taking these initial steps, a study was undertaken to fully assess the vulnerability of the White House complex. This study resulted in the installation of temporary concrete barriers around the perimeter of the complex and the positioning of large barriers at primary entry points. These enhancements were designed to prevent an explosive-laden vehicle from penetrating the perimeter of the White House complex. This was the beginning of the design effort for permanent bollards that eventually replaced the temporary concrete barriers.

The Secret Service also identified a need to quantify the vulnerability of the complex to explosive detonations from outside the perimeter. Southwest Research Institute, one of the oldest and largest independent, nonprofit research organizations in the United States, was selected to conduct a classified study. Their methodology involved obtaining structural data on the White House and selecting likely explosive detonation points on the streets surrounding the White House complex. Analyses were then conducted to determine the structural vulnerabilities of various buildings within the White House complex.

In 1986, the findings of the study were received and then provided to the Army Corps of Engineers at Waterways Experimental Station in Vicksburg, MS, and the Naval Engineering Center in Port Waneemee, CA, for independent review and verification. Both groups concurred with the findings of Southwest Research. During the latter part of 1994, the Southwest Research Institute was requested to revalidate the results of the 1986 study.

The White House complex was found to be vulnerable to high explosive detonations from outside the fence line prior to the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue, State Place, Alexander Hamilton Place, and portions of South Executive Avenue to vehicular traffic. Because the White House is a national monument, studies have shown that it would be virtually impossible to increase the structural integrity to a level that could withstand these explosive detonations while still preserving it historically. The only reasonable alternative was to increase the distance between the structure and the area where an explosive-laden vehicle could be placed. By increasing the standoff distances from the White House, the threat of catastrophic structural collapse with the resulting loss of life is significantly reduced. The World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombings demonstrated how easily explosives can be obtained or manufactured, and the simplicity with which a devastating device can be constructed and delivered, and the destructive impact on buildings and adjacent public venues.

According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, whose responsibility it is to regulate commercial explosives here in the United States, substantial amounts of commercial explosives, blasting agents, and detonators are stolen each year. While these thefts pose a major concern, the most common source of explosives used in vehicle bombs are unregulated supplies of chemicals such as ammonium nitrate fertilizer, which is then mixed with fuel oil. As you

know, ammonium nitrate fertilizer is available to the public from any hardware, garden, and farm supply store.

Detailed instructions of how to manufacture this type of explosive, as well as how to create other types of equally deadly explosives, are commercially available in dozens of publications. These sources are designed to instruct someone with no previous experience—how to make their own explosives and how to construct and position virtually every type of bomb imaginable. This information has been found in the possession of terrorists and at sites where law enforcement officials have discovered bomb factories. The same information is also publicly available on the Internet.

The Secret Service is committed to the use of technology in furtherance of our protective and investigative missions. Alternatives to closing Pennsylvania Avenue were examined without success. The advisory committee required full explanations of all the possible options and why the options would not work before they ever concurred that the avenue should be closed. The panel had concluded that the closing was justified even before the bombing in Oklahoma City.

Although specific intelligence information cannot be discussed in detail in an open forum, it is known that members of certain foreign and domestic terrorist groups operate within the United States. Those terrorist and extremist groups have demonstrated a propensity for mounting their attacks to coincide with symbolic dates or at symbolic targets. The White House is one of the most symbolic targets in the United States. There is every reason to believe that given the opportunity these extremist groups and individuals will strike. This matter does not only concern the protection of the President and other Government officials and a national landmark, it is a tremendous public safety issue with respect to individuals in and around the White House complex.

Devices similar to those used at the World Trade Center and in Oklahoma City can cause destruction as much as five blocks away from the target. The fact of the matter is the people who would undertake that type of act are present in this country. The means and ability to carry out this type of act are available. The only thing that is preventing the terrorist or extremist from mounting an attack is the lack of success. It is not a matter of if this will occur, it is a matter of when it will occur.

Mr. Chairman, I want to be clear about this because this is a critical discussion. Senator Grams earlier outlined what he considered to be some indisputable facts, and I would like to outline some realities.

The reality is the White House is a target. That is not a question that it is a target. The President is a target. And the fact also is you can't protect the White House from a car bomb with Pennsylvania Avenue open to vehicular traffic.

If we start with a picture, picture the White House collapsed, and the area around the White House extraordinarily damaged with the death and destruction and people injured and maimed, and we have seen in other incidents and you work your way back from that picture and ask yourself, what can you do to prevent that from happening? What can you do to prevent that from happening? Closing Pennsylvania Avenue.

Others may speculate to vehicular traffic. That is others may speculate that there must be some other way to address this problem, some magic technology or innovative method that could result in the same level of security.

We drew our conclusions based on an in-depth engineering study which was validated by two separate entities. A reference to identify defense measures has been exhaustive and include continuous liaison with international and domestic experts in the fields of law enforcement, military, engineering experts, and with several national laboratories.

The Secret Service takes great pride in its protective mission and in its ability to assess the threats posed to our protectees and protected facilities. We see no basis to project a decrease in the threat that exists. Security measures are designed to eliminate, minimize, or reduce a threat. We can take this threat away with the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic. For the Secret Service to recommend less, with the knowledge and information we have, would be inconsistent with the available data and would be irresponsible on my part.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for this opportunity. That concludes my prepared remarks, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Bowron, thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bowron follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELIJAY BOWRON, DIRECTOR, U.S. SECRET SERVICE

Good morning Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank you, the other members of the committee, and your staff for providing this forum. On behalf of the U.S. Secret Service, I appreciate the opportunity to address the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic and the need for it to remain so. On May 20, 1995, Secretary Robert Rubin directed the Secret Service to prohibit unauthorized motor vehicle traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House and to close two short streets on the southwest corner of the complex. The Pennsylvania Avenue area then became a pedestrian mall, open to the public. The Secret Service remains steadfast in its belief that the threat to the White House Complex by explosive-laden vehicles is genuine and that, given the opportunity, an attack will occur.

The decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue was, in part, based on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee of the White House Security Review, a nonpartisan, distinguished panel of experts. This committee was empaneled following several security incidents at the White House, the most notable being the air crash on the South Grounds. It was the most controversial recommendation submitted by the Advisory Committee, but by no means a "knee-jerk" reaction. The recommendation was based on thorough technical analysis. Concerns about the vulnerability of the White House were heightened by the 1983 truck bombing of the U.S. Marine Barracks in Beirut and confirmed by the bombings of the World Trade Center in New York and the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

Immediately following the 1983 Beirut bombing, the Secret Service implemented countermeasures against a similar type of attack occurring at the White House. These countermeasures involved placing U.S. Park Service dump trucks filled with sand in front of the gates considered vulnerable. After taking these initial steps, a study was undertaken to fully assess the vulnerability of the White House Complex. This study resulted in the installation of temporary concrete barriers around the perimeter of the complex and the positioning of large barriers at primary entry points. These enhancements were designed to prevent an explosive-laden vehicle from penetrating the perimeter of the White House complex. This was the beginning of the design effort for permanent *bollards* that eventually replaced the temporary concrete barriers.

The Secret Service also identified a need to quantify the vulnerability of the complex to explosive detonations from outside the perimeter. Southwest Research Institute, one of the oldest and largest independent, nonprofit research organizations in the United States, was selected to conduct a classified study. Their methodology in-

volved obtaining structural data on the White House and selecting likely explosive detonation points on the streets surrounding the White House complex. Analyses were then conducted to determine the structural vulnerabilities of various buildings within the White House complex.

In 1986, the findings of the study were received and then provided to the Army Corps of Engineers at Waterways Experimental Station in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and the Naval Engineering Center in Port Waneemee, California, for independent review and verification. Both groups concurred with the findings of Southwest Research. During the latter part of 1994, the Southwest Research Institute was requested to re-validate the results of the 1986 study.

The White House Complex was found to be vulnerable to high explosive detonations from outside the fence line prior to the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue, State Place, Alexander Hamilton Place and portions of South Executive Avenue to vehicular traffic. Because the White House is a National Monument, studies have shown that it would be virtually impossible to increase the structural integrity to a level that could withstand these explosive detonations while still preserving it historically. The only reasonable alternative was to increase the distance between the structure and the area where an explosive-laden vehicle could be placed. By increasing the standoff distances from the White House, the threat of catastrophic structural collapse with the resulting loss of life is significantly reduced. The World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombings demonstrated how easily explosives can be obtained or manufactured, and the simplicity with which a devastating device can be constructed and delivered, and the destructive impact on buildings and adjacent public venues.

According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, whose responsibility it is to regulate commercial explosives here in the United States, substantial amounts of commercial explosives, blasting agents, and detonators are stolen each year. While these thefts pose a major concern, the most common source of explosives used in vehicle bombs are unregulated supplies of chemicals such as ammonium nitrate fertilizer, which is then mixed with fuel oil. As you know, ammonium nitrate fertilizer is available to the public from any hardware, garden and farm supply store.

Detailed instructions of how to manufacture this type of explosive, as well as how to create other types of equally deadly explosives, are commercially available in dozens of publications. These sources are designed to instruct someone with no previous experience—how to make their own explosives and how to construct and position virtually every type of bomb imaginable. This information has been found in the possession of terrorists and at sites where law enforcement officials have discovered bomb factories. The same information is also publicly available on the Internet.

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Although specific intelligence information cannot be discussed in detail in an open forum, it is known that members of certain foreign and domestic terrorist groups operate within the United States. Those terrorist and extremist groups have demonstrated a propensity for mounting their attacks to coincide with symbolic dates or at symbolic targets. The White House is one of the most symbolic targets in the United States. There is every reason to believe that given the opportunity, these extremist individuals and groups will strike. This matter does not only concern the protection of the President and other government officials and a national landmark—it is a tremendous public safety issue with respect to individuals in and around the White House complex. Devices similar to those used at the World Trade Center and in Oklahoma City can cause destruction as much as five blocks away from the target. The fact of the matter is—the people who would undertake that type of act are present in this country. The means and ability to carry out this type of act are available. The only thing that is preventing the terrorist or extremist from mounting an attack is the lack of access. If you open Pennsylvania Avenue—it's not a matter if they can, and at some point, they will destroy the White House.

The United States Secret Service takes great pride in its protective mission and its ability to assess the threats posed to our protectees and protected facilities. We see no basis to project a decrease in that threat. Security measures are designed to eliminate a threat or reduce a threat. The latter has been accomplished with the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic. For the Secret Service to recommend less would be inconsistent with the available data and, therefore, would be considered irresponsible.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before the committee. This concludes my prepared statement. I will be pleased to answer any questions you or the other members of the committee may have.

Mr. DAVIS. First of all, I feel you are at a little bit of a disadvantage because there are things you can't discuss; and you have offered to do that at a private briefing, but you can't go through all of that. I want to acknowledge that for all the people who are watching today. You may be able to tell a more compelling story were you able to lay everything on the table. I recognize that, and Ms. Norton recognizes that. And your job—I think you are just doing your job in terms of the recommendations that you are making. You don't get your way on any recommendation you make for the security for the White House, do you?

Mr. BOWRON. No.

Mr. DAVIS. There are judgment calls and you are doing your job. Whatever else is said here, we recognize that you have that role to play, and that judgment and decisions sometimes get elevated over you where you have a lot of conflicting advice and balancing of different things. The White House is not impenetrable. If somebody wants to get there, there are still a number of ways. You are just taking one other way of getting it away.

Mr. BOWRON. As I said, Mr. Chairman, there are threats that can be eliminated, there are threats that can be minimized, and there are threats that can be avoided. There is no threat that we just throw up our hands and say, there is nothing we can do about that. If we took that approach to our job, we, frankly, wouldn't be successful.

Mr. DAVIS. It is not impenetrable now. It just takes an option and makes it less likely to occur.

Mr. BOWRON. This particular option can be eliminated. There are other options that perhaps can't be totally eliminated but can be greatly minimized and we take steps to do that.

Mr. DAVIS. I understand.

Are you still willing to explore other alternatives to accomplishing the same goal? Do you think you have exhausted them all or are you willing to hear new ones?

Mr. BOWRON. We believe we have exhausted all the recommended and suggested alternatives that have been imposed. If someone has another new option, we would be interested to examine it and evaluate it.

Mr. DAVIS. Would raising the fence around the White House eliminate—it doesn't eliminate the bomb issue but wouldn't it eliminate one of the major security concerns expressed as well as address another—some of the incidents that have been cited?

Mr. BOWRON. Raising the fence around the White House really would only have a significant impact on the fence jumpers, the people who go over the fence, the intruders. While that is a serious concern of the Secret Service, the fact of the matter is that it is a very manageable threat and we are able to deal with it with the security measures we have in place now and have successfully dealt with those matters each and every time they have risen.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Johnson, I think you were on the review team that compiled background information for the White House's security review. The report was dated May 1995. It did not appear to

recommend the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, even on a temporary basis. Where in the report is that recommendation?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Chairman, I would direct your attention to page 42 of the report. Where it says: "After careful consideration of the information that has been provided, the review was not able to identify any alternative to prohibiting vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue that would ensure the protection of the President and others in the White House complex from explosive devices."

Mr. DAVIS. In view of some of the specific incidents noted, such as a plane attempting to crash into the White House, closing Pennsylvania Avenue doesn't fit into the findings for that, does it?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Chairman, there were several incidents that the review examined, but our marching orders were to leave no stone unturned. So we examined potential air assaults. We also examined ground security issues in and around the White House. We were determined not to simply fight the last war and deal with the lone shooter but to deal with the wide array of threats that we all know are out in the world and are viable.

Mr. DAVIS. Let me ask, Mr. Bowron, what about the aircraft and the missiles and that kind of thing at the White House? Have you taken appropriate action?

Mr. BOWRON. Yes, sir, those are different security threats and there are different sets—

Mr. DAVIS. Very real threats.

Mr. BOWRON. Very real threats and we take them very seriously.

Mr. DAVIS. You could make the same argument it is not "if" but "when" for those threats, couldn't you?

Mr. BOWRON. You could say that those attempts will be made and you could say if and when with respect to those attempts, but we have also taken steps to do everything we can do to minimize and address those threats and have considerable measures in place that I really can't discuss in an open forum. It is a different type of assault and attempt and a different type of response on the Secret Service. Nevertheless, it is a specific response and security plan with respect to those type of incidents.

I would like just to say one other thing about that, though, when you talk about the other type of incidents.

Mr. DAVIS. There are innumerable types of additional incidents. We couldn't even go into them all here.

Mr. BOWRON. Exactly. But for every one we can even imagine, we devise a security plan and have a response that we consider to be the most effective response possible to minimize, eliminate, or reduce that threat. Or avoid that threat.

Mr. DAVIS. Let me ask you, the presence of National Airport—is that helpful or not?

Mr. BOWRON. Is it helpful? No.

Mr. DAVIS. But you are not proposing that we close National Airport, not at this point at least.

Mr. BOWRON. No, we are not. We introduced measures—

Mr. DAVIS. I told you it wasn't all bad. It is a question of degree.

You are doing your job and I am sure in a perfect world we would do a lot of things differently. This is a judgment call. Other Presidents have dealt with the same thing. The bombings in New York were previous to this. There was the Beirut complex under

President Reagan and they did not react in the same way, yet the same threat was there. I am sure he examined it in the same way and a different judgment call was made.

Mr. BOWRON. There is different information now than there has been in the past. There are different events that have occurred in this country. There are different levels of both presence and activity, and there are things, as you indicated, Mr. Chairman, I can't go into in this hearing. There is information that is different and there have been events that have changed how these type of vulnerabilities have to be dealt with.

If you—for example, one of the incidents that was examined was Francisco Duran's firing the automatic weapon at the front of the White House. Raising the fence won't change that. Closing Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicle traffic won't change that, but that was before Oklahoma City. Francisco Duran traveled to Washington, DC in a pickup truck and he came here to kill the President. If he had loaded that truck with Ampho instead of using an automatic weapon, it would have been, at no greater expense in terms of dollars out of anyone's pocket, the outcome would have been a whole lot different.

Mr. DAVIS. I could give you other outcomes if he really wanted to do it that are not as defensible as that, but I understand you are trying to work in degrees and you are doing your job. I just want to say I understand the White House has other things to balance. Let me just ask you one last question.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Chairman, let me add one thing in terms of response of other Presidents. In 1984, there was the Beirut bombing. And at that time, East Executive Avenue was closed. It was subsequently closed—it was open but after that bombing there was a response and that resulted—there were two concerns. There was one of the security of visitors who were crossing a busy street and the other was the Secret Service's concern about the White House. East Executive Avenue was closed.

Responses to other incidents when before President Reagan was shot, there were no metal detectors at the White House. Afterwards we put in place, the Secret Service put in place metal detectors, so there have been responses—

Mr. DAVIS. You have metal detectors at the Orioles opening game now. You didn't have that a few years ago. There is no question, we are continuing to reinvent and revisit this, and I don't question that, but you are at a loss because you can't give us some information that is on the inside that could shed greater light on the decision you made. That is all. I appreciate that.

Mr. JOHNSON. We may not be able to give it to you in this forum but we would welcome the opportunity to give much of this information to you in a classified briefing.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you.

Let me now recognize the gentlelady from the District of Columbia, Ms. Norton, and then Mr. Moran for questions.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to try my best not to shoot the messengers. Although in this case when we are dealing with security, I believe the messengers come close to being the culprit.

The President is not an expert in security so when the messengers come by and say the sky is falling and you are going to die. I suppose it is rather difficult, particularly when confronted with a statement like the statement Mr. Bowron just made, words to the effect that the question is not if the President and the White House is a target, the question is when.

Mr. Bowron, I want you to know that may be the case but if I might offer a suggestion. It is a bit like my coming before a Member of the House or Senate and saying, before the Rodney King verdict, that if that verdict lets the cops off I can tell you one thing, there are going to be riots in the streets. It is not a dime's worth of difference between those two and when your head of the Secret Service says that.

I think you send the message out as intelligibly as anybody could. If the White House is not a target and if the President is not a target, put it on your list, because I who come from the Secret Service have just testified that it ought to be a target. I don't think that is a way or a responsible way for you to talk.

Now, Mr. Johnson, you said on page 9 on the consultations, let me say as a member of the bar, do I assume you are a member of the bar?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes ma'am.

Ms. NORTON. What you say on page 9 would not be considered a way for a member of the bar to offer information before the bar to a court, and I expect the same respect here.

On the evening of May 19, the review consulted with the President who reluctantly provided final concurrence with Secretary Rubin's decision without saying that you immediately close down the White House on Pennsylvania Avenue in the dark of the night. You then go on to leave the impression in this testimony that before that happened you consulted with the chairman, with the Bloomingdale Civic Association and you list a whole bunch of folks here from DC that you consulted with knowing full well that those consultations did not precede closing down Pennsylvania Avenue and therefore should not be called consultations. They were information that you gave to them after the decision had been made.

I got a phone call close to midnight on the 19th saying that the close down would be occurring immediately. I would appreciate it if you would—I would have appreciated it if that statement would have been clarified, the circumstances.

Mr. JOHNSON. May I respectfully respond?

Ms. NORTON. You certainly may.

Mr. JOHNSON. Respectfully, prior to that hearing, I guess within the last 4 days, I have heard from some of the people that I listed. Specifically, I heard from the representative of the Bloomingdale Civic Association and what he emphasized to me was that he was consulted prior to the closing. He made a point after seeing some of the public discourse of this to emphasize to me that he had been consulted and faxed it to me earlier this week emphasizing that fact.

I also have, because I undertake my obligation to testify accurately very seriously, we also have the chronology of consultations with Members of Congress that were taken before this, including a letter from yourself in which you acknowledge at least that infor-

mation was provided. That letter I believe was dated June 23, which is 4 days after the closing and refers to conversations that took place before the closing.

There was also, and the director will correct me if I am wrong, I believe a Washington Post article in which you yourself were—you refer to conversations that you had with Under Secretary Noble prior to the closing. The charge you just made is a very serious one. I take my obligation as a person under oath and as an attorney very seriously. Actually the letter is May 23.

Ms. NORTON. Let me indicate the circumstances of the so-called consultation. Secretary Noble, indeed, did come to see me and he was clear that no decision had been made to close Pennsylvania Avenue. And I am sure if he was clear on that to me, he told the Bloomingdale Civic Association no less, and we were led to believe that this matter was entirely open and you should not further—you should not deepen the problem I have with the way this matter is stated by indicating that we knew ahead of time that Pennsylvania Avenue would be closed. We knew no such thing. We expected it would not happen. We expected that if it did there would be surely some notification beforehand. So what I said stands.

I don't want to get into a dogfight over that. I want you to know the impression you have made on me, and even if what you say is true, the fact is that this testimony says on May 19th something happened; namely, that the President made that decision. And then it says, we then immediately notified Mayor Barry, Counsel Chairman Clarke, Chairman Davis, leaving the impression that there was some time between May 19th when you were—and the closing when you consulted.

My point remains that at the very least this piece of paper, this piece of paper, whatever your chronology shows, this piece of paper is not the way to testify before a committee because it leaves a false impression. I will accept that you did not mean to leave a false impression, but I will not accept it as testimony or anyone reading this testimony from the beginning would not be led to believe that there had been consultations before the actual close-down took place.

Now, may I ask whether any of you have visited the World Trade Center—excuse me—either of you have visited the World Trade Center.

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes; I have. I was in the area on February 25, 1993, when the bomb went off, and until recently lived in New York and visited there fairly frequently.

Ms. NORTON. Have the streets leading to the World Trade Center been closed off?

Mr. JOHNSON. I noted—I recall there being jersey barriers around the area but I don't think that the streets have been permanently closed off.

Ms. NORTON. Of course the World Trade Center has had the very catastrophe we seek to avoid to occur here. Do you think it was wise for them not to close the streets off?

Mr. JOHNSON. I believe that they made a security judgment. I am—I don't know—I am not familiar with the security arrangements about the World Trade Center.

Ms. NORTON. I think you ought to become more familiar with them, because it is the one beyond Oklahoma City. It seems to me it is the only case study we have because it has happened there. I would think you would have encyclopedic knowledge about the World Trade Center, everything that happened there, and what has been taken—what precautions have been taken.

Mr. Bowron, do you have thorough knowledge of the World Trade Center, what has happened—what happened there and what has happened since?

Mr. BOWRON. I know they have made security changes as a result of the bombing. I can't detail what those changes have been, but I can say this, that the World Trade Center as a target is not analogous to the White House at all, and they didn't have the kind of intelligence with respect to the World Trade Center or with other Federal buildings or landmarks in the United States like we have with respect to the White House.

Ms. NORTON. You are certainly right about that, and beforehand they had no way to suspect that would happen. Of course, afterwards, you would think that the World Trade Center, one of the tallest buildings in the world, which has already experienced this tragedy, might be at the very least a place that we would want to study very, very carefully for whatever clues it could provide us for the future as you want to watch out.

Well, let me ask this question. I recognize that the Secret Service has to have tunnel vision; I really do. I recognize that the Secret Service is different from a police department even, which in my judgment should not have tunnel vision. When a President is threatened, I regard it as a threat to the State itself.

I think that the disappointment here was summarized by Mr. Moran in a word, balanced. I don't expect that balance to come from the Secret Service; I really don't. I think you have a job and that your job is to lay on the table all of the threats, frankly, sometimes perhaps a worse case of threats that you don't expect to happen, but to lay them out.

Mr. Johnson, however, the Secret Service is in the jurisdiction of a larger department. The committee has been concerned, so concerned that it invited Alice Rivlin, who obviously has not been involved here. The committee is concerned that this entire matter is being driven exclusively by the Secret Service and by an almost monolithic concern that must be their concern and that there is nobody who sits over this process trying to do what must be done in a democracy to weigh threats against other costs to the society.

I wonder—as much as Mr. Bowron is everybody's culprit, including mine, I really must turn to the Treasury and ask you, who have oversight over Mr. Bowron, who in the administration is in charge of the matter that involved the entire region closing down a city and the protection of the President? Who is in charge?

Mr. JOHNSON. The matter has been in part and will in the future be overseen by the Interagency D.C. Task Force, which will be assessing the impact. As you know, I am sure, all members of this committee know the D.C. Task Force is an interagency committee that the President established just a year ago and that Director Rivlin chairs.

Ms. NORTON. Excuse me. A task force; first of all, I know the D.C. Task Force intimately, frankly. You know it is a bunch of Federal agencies who are, frankly, having an ad hoc affect on the District and not having the kind of effect I would expect the administration to have. You know it is this and that agency occasionally doing this and that thing, frankly, in a fairly uncoordinated fashion which hasn't been felt very much in this committee.

The only good thing that happened was that Carol Thompson Cole was recently hired. You got somebody who knew the District and would follow through and go back and forth, and I am very grateful for that. This task force has no senior person on it and is not in charge of anything to do with this problem. It does try to help the District.

I am asking, Who coordinates the many issues involved in this matter?

Mr. JOHNSON. There are three agencies that are involved. We have been involved in the coordination of the security issues with respect to the long-term design and traffic issues. Those would be the Department of the Interior and the Department of Transportation.

Ms. NORTON. Since all of them are independent, do you all work as a group? You are on a task force that meets every so often on this question. Have you got any—are there any findings of the group that you can tell us about?

Mr. JOHNSON. With respect to findings—I can say that there is frequent consultation among those agencies. With respect to specific findings, one of the issues that has been on the table is obviously the design of the area, and that I understand has been opened up for public comment.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Johnson, I wish you——

Mr. JOHNSON. Can I just augment my answer? The White House has been holding regular meetings of that particular group, and it meets approximately every 6 weeks.

Ms. NORTON. I don't know; when the White House holds meetings, nobody holds meetings, because the White House is not a person, and you'd better watch out because you are seeming to implicate the President when I don't think that is fair and I don't think that is true.

One suggestion that I would make that would help this committee in its work would be that in order to assure this committee and the District of Columbia that this—the many issues involved here have comprehensive oversight, that there be an administration figure whose job it is to take into account the many issues that have been raised since the closing came down. That would help this matter. I would make that request.

Mr. Bowron, do you ever consult with members of the private sector concerning security matters?

Mr. BOWRON. Yes.

Ms. NORTON. Do you consult with foreign countries?

Mr. BOWRON. Yes.

Ms. NORTON. Did you consult with private security experts before deciding to close down Pennsylvania Avenue?

Mr. BOWRON. I would have to go back since 1983 and try and determine whether private entities were included in the Secret Serv-

ice's research or not. But the Southwest Research Institute is, in fact, a private entity, but it does Government contract work.

Ms. NORTON. I mean people who were in the security business who may work—for example, there are banks and corporations and foreign countries where they live daily, which is something you all haven't begun to see. They live daily with terrorism.

Have security experts, private security experts, who live daily with terrorism, have to protect corporate officials and banks and foreign embassies, have these people been consulted?

Mr. BOWRON. We interact with people like you describe on a regular basis with respect to our protective mission all over the world. As a matter of fact, any time there is a terrorist incident or bombing or security incident of great significance or impact around the world, we study those in detail for our own concern to see how vulnerable we would have been to that type of circumstance and consult with anybody and everyone that we can that has information to bear on the subject matter.

Ms. NORTON. I tell you, Mr. Bowron, you haven't convinced me that state-of-the-art techniques are—that the Secret Service is fully advised in the state-of-the-art techniques. If you go up to a place that you know would be a target of terrorism, to the Israeli Embassy, they have found a way that must be secure, because I think the Israelis are the envy of the world when it comes to security. I don't see any moats, and I don't see any—I don't see any barriers. And they are right up there near the University of the District of Columbia, and somehow they live right in the middle of one of our neighborhoods without the kind of barriers that even before the White House as a target might have been concerned about.

Mr. BOWRON. I am not going to get into a discussion of the security at the Israeli Embassy, which we are involved in as a part of the protection of foreign missions—

Ms. NORTON. I am not asking you about the security; I am asking you to look at the fact that my democratic society if you walk past the Israeli Embassy it looks like any other building, and yet they have found a way to protect it.

I am telling you when you look at the No. 1 target in the city, the Israeli Embassy, somehow or the other they have not put themselves behind the kind of barriers that you have recommended for the White House.

Mr. BOWRON. First of all, I would not concur that the Israeli Embassy is the No. 1 target in this city.

Ms. NORTON. Because you know they can't get them.

Mr. BOWRON. Your question about technology, I wish that there were this magic technology that could be brought to bear on the environment that we are discussing here, but there isn't. And if someone has it, we would be very interested in evaluating it, but we haven't been able to find anybody that can make that suggestion or bring that kind of technology to the table for evaluation.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I have several more questions. I will wait until after my good colleague, Mr. Moran, has asked his.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you.

I recognize Mr. Moran.

Mr. MORAN. I have to say, you are so nice to these witnesses to suggest that—I was referring to Tom. You suggest, of course, that

they can't come forward with all of this information that would have to be restricted to a classified briefing. Have you ever been to a classified briefing where you haven't heard anything that wasn't already in the newspaper this morning?

Mr. DAVIS. I haven't yet, but they may live out in the 11th District.

Mr. MORAN. That's right. I hadn't thought about that. I should have thought about that when I was reviewing all of that terribly impressive process that Mr. Johnson described, that you interviewed three former Presidents and you—300 individuals from 10 Government agencies, analyzed more than 1,000 documents, 20 technical and public access experts, you interviewed experts from 8 foreign countries—the Pope, Mother Teresa, Dalai Lama, I am sure everybody that you could, to enhance the impressiveness of this process that you went through.

How many people were involved in this, Mr. Johnson?

Mr. JOHNSON. I will have to check—

Mr. MORAN. Just roughly. Hundreds if not thousands, I suppose.

Well, we have certainly lost too many Federal employees already. I don't want to suggest that they have better things to do with their time, but—

Mr. JOHNSON. I can tell the number of the team if you wish. The review team had 14 members. There were six advisors, and Ronald Noble, the former Under Secretary oversaw the review team, and there were several lawyers involved from the Office of General Counsel.

Mr. MORAN. Several lawyers from the Office of General Counsel.

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. MORAN. Do you plan to permanently close Pennsylvania Avenue?

Mr. JOHNSON. Our authorization is—the Secretary's authority is to close Pennsylvania Avenue as long as there are facts that would justify closing it, and we see that the facts that have justified closing Pennsylvania Avenue as existing, as the director had said, for the foreseeable future.

Mr. MORAN. For the foreseeable future. That is in the 21st century, clearly.

Do you ever envision any time where there would not be the availability of explosives or people who might want to damage the White House? Can you ever foresee that changing in the foreseeable future?

Mr. BOWRON. I would like to be able to foresee that, but the way that world events are right now, no, I don't see a decrease in the threats posed by terrorists and extremists in the country.

Mr. MORAN. So the answer is yes; we do intend to permanently close Pennsylvania Avenue.

With all of these lawyers, have any of them prepared to go before the D.C. City Council and go through the normal process for closing the street? Has there been—when do you plan to go before the D.C. Council to request a closing of the street?

Mr. JOHNSON. My understanding, the lawyer's opinion, is that, one, since we have title to the strip of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House; and, two, the Secretary has the authority to make the findings and the closures that such a procedure wasn't

necessary. That is something that is a question that I can check with the lawyers on, sir.

Mr. MORAN. Well, it seems to me that is a fairly obvious thing with all of these minions of lawyers and high-priced people.

Pennsylvania Avenue is a main street in a sovereign city—it is a sovereign city, isn't it, the District of Columbia?

I can't imagine, when I was mayor of Alexandria, the Federal Government coming in and shutting down Washington Street, and I am sure that we would have required the Federal Government, as important as the Federal Government is, to actually go through the process of public hearings and listening to the people actually affected.

These three Presidents are very important people, but, you know, they don't do a lot of driving up and down Pennsylvania Avenue on their own, nor do the experts from eight foreign countries, I suspect.

That is a very good point the chairman makes, that Presidents Carter and Ford called for the reopening; 300 individuals from 10 Federal Government agencies.

I think this is—I know this is meant to impress all the people that you talk to. I think you went about it the wrong way. I think that it was an arrogant process vis-a-vis the District of Columbia government. I think a lot of the stuff we do—and I have to say, particularly in the security agency, Mr. Bowron, he does his job, I am sure, as well as anybody that has ever represented the Secret Service—headed the Secret Service.

Eleanor is absolutely right that you are doing your job. The problem is that President Clinton needs to say to you people, get real. This is silly.

President Clinton is going to see millions of people around the country during the campaign. Almost any of them, if they wanted to, on almost any public appearance he makes—and we have all been around a lot of public appearances; we know the way he is; he insists on shaking everybody's hand, getting into the crowd, regardless of the Secret Service people on either side. And you can see the angst on their faces. His style is to see everybody, and the result is, he exposes himself to a possibility of assassination every single day, and he knows it. It comes with the territory really. It comes with the job.

I know you guys are trying to do your job. You have to admit, in good conscience, you can't prevent it; you can make it more difficult.

We are really not talking about preventing the President from being assassinated. What we are really talking about here is preventing a physical facility from getting bombed; is that not correct? That is what we are really about.

You are going to say also the President and the people in the White House, we are concerned about them too, but it is really the physical facility.

I am going to give you a lot of time to respond.

Mr. BOWRON. I will wait my turn.

Mr. MORAN. You said that a bomb can—in making another point, that these bombs can blow something up five blocks away. That means if you are really serious about this, if you want to accom-

plish your objective, instead of changing it a bit on the margin, then you would have to block off streets five blocks around the entire perimeter. You are going to have to prove to me that your earlier statement that a bomb can blow something up five blocks away should have been qualified.

Now, what about the Supreme Court Building? You'd better make notes on this too, because truck and pickup trucks, and anybody rides down First Street in front of the Supreme Court, he can go up that little street. What is that, Carolina Avenue, that little street behind the United Methodist Building? Maryland Avenue.

They can ride up there, actually within a few hundred yards closer than that—and it seems to me the Supreme Court Building of the United States is a fairly important monument—probably fell under the sheik. The sheik is arrested, he is out of—I am sure you assume there are sheiks all over the place, but when people like that list these buildings, the Supreme Court Building has got to be one of them. But the Supreme Court Building is closer to the street than the White House is to Pennsylvania Avenue. And you have got nine Supreme Court Justices in there at the same time, an equal branch of Government.

You have got the Capital here, the President. If you are willing to wait 4 years, you can deal with it then. These guys have life tenure, so whether you like them or not—Tom keeps making very good comments. I appreciate that.

The Capitol—the U.S. Capitol. You can drive a truck on Independence Avenue. They certainly don't check the trucks on Independence Avenue. You can get a little truck in that little roadway very close. They can block at the gates. But those gates are just, what, 20 yards, 25 yards from the Capitol Building itself. So the Capitol Building is actually closer to the public, to unrestricted screening of vehicles, than the White House is today with the lawn around it, and the Treasury Building on one side and the Old Executive Office Building on the other.

So the fact is that—I know since the mayor has come in that the focus will be on him, but I have got to tell you, I think that what you have done makes a point, shows what the Secret Service is doing. It gives you visibility.

And I am sure you are doing your job. I just don't think that it is going to accomplish your ultimate objective of protecting the White House or these other buildings, and I don't see that the White House is any more precious, valuable, than the Supreme Court Building or the Capitol.

And the President is probably the person most controversial but not a lot more controversial than the Supreme Court Justices, and actually I can think of a few of our colleagues.

But the point is that when you cannot accomplish something perfectly, it seems to me you have to exercise some budget, some balance, some common sense. What you have done, in my way of thinking, in blocking off Pennsylvania Avenue lacks that common sense, although it is bolstered by all kinds of interviews and people scurrying around, but none of them talked to people they should have, which are the elected representatives of the District government within the facility they are located. Those should have been the first people.

When we are talking about consulting, it means sitting down and getting their opinion, not after the fact, whether it is after you made a decision or after the decision is implemented. Letting them know about the call from the Secretary to Ms. Norton at night, that is not what we are talking about. We are talking about real consultation, and that was not done.

Even I know we would have been so far down the line that we never would have gotten your attention, but even people who represent the people who drive in there who are spending 25 more minutes trying to get to work because of this blocking off of Pennsylvania Avenue because you blocked up 17th and 15th Street to such an extent.

I also really question that what you have done even enhances the security of the White House. When you figure what we have today, we have this guy who was able to fly a plane on to the White House lawn, and we have had people with guns, now if we were to put a park there at Lafayette Square, the Park Service wants to make a park out of Pennsylvania Avenue.

You are going to be providing much more access to many more people who would have this in mind. If you wanted to bring a plane or a helicopter, it is a heck of a lot easier landing pad than Pennsylvania Avenue if you wanted to do that, and it has been individuals that have caused the problem. You have many more individuals.

Right now you really only have that strip of sidewalk to deal with. Now you are going to have an entire park with much more access. It is easy to be critical when you are not responsible for the results of your decisions, and my guess is that that would be the first thing on your mind.

But we do have to be responsible for the decisions that our Government makes. Actually, we, the direct representatives of the people, are the ones who have to answer to them for this. And in fact you are in the executive branch; your role is to carry out decisions made by the legislative branch. Now, I don't see that there was any involvement by the legislative branch. And, to conclude, I also think that this is wholly contrary to what President Clinton is all about.

With that, I'm going to give you a chance to respond to some of this. I guess probably at this point I have made myself relatively clear on where I stand on this, but I would like to hear from you if you really think I am off base on anything I said.

Mr. Bowron.

Mr. BOWRON. I am clear on where you stand, Mr. Congressman; there is no question on that.

I would respond to a couple of issues that you raised. First of all, as I indicated earlier, there are a number of ways that someone could attempt to assassinate a President or a world leader. We address every one of those methods, and the fact that you see a Secret Service protectee out in public, to suggest that we haven't taken into consideration what the vulnerabilities are and undertaken measures to address those vulnerabilities is just flat out incorrect. We do, and there are things that we can do, and we do them, and sometimes what we do is not obvious and is not evident,

but nevertheless it is done, and I am not going to discuss those measures in any detail in this public forum.

With respect to the five blocks, I think when you talk about increased public access in terms of individuals and people on foot and pedestrians and things like that, there are risks associated with those individuals and pedestrians and with increased public access, but increased public access is exactly what everyone wanted with respect to the White House to not shut it off from the public, and that was a very important consideration of all of the parties that were involved leading up to this recommendation.

However, the threats posed by those individuals are manageable threats that we have methods of defending against. I am going to say it again, and I know Representative Norton thinks maybe it is irresponsible for me to say it. I think it would be irresponsible for me not to say it, because the fact of the matter is, if you want to have vehicle traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue, in this day and age, with the availability of the materials and the motive and intent and intelligence we have, then what you are asking me to do is keep my fingers crossed and hope that nobody wants to do it, because if they want to, they can.

With respect to the five blocks, that is the balance that you are talking about. Should we shut the area off and not have anyone in there? No, because there should be balance and everyone agrees with the access that there has to be to our leaders and to the White House, and that is part of the balance, to continue that access.

Five blocks; we could go out further and there would be no risk of any damage to the White House. The fact of the matter is, if they had to move five blocks away from Pennsylvania Avenue, we might sustain in the White House complex glass breakage and other destruction. The destruction would not be structural type that would result in the loss of life and death of the President and perhaps many others that would result from Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mr. MORAN. You responded the way I expected you to, which was fine and professional. When you can't do a perfect job, you ought to do a reasonable job.

Did Mr. Johnson want to respond at all?

I did reference some of your efforts, so it is only fair to give you a chance to respond. You did a terrific job of testimony incidentally. It was really impressive and articulate, and welcome aboard to the Treasury Department.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you for baptism. The—

Mr. DAVIS. Did you volunteer to come here today?

Mr. JOHNSON. I think the rest of the line stepped back and I was left standing out in front.

Only with respect to the consultations, I think what would be most productive if I would go back with my staff; we have a list of Congressmen and Representatives and Senators that were either talked to, met with, or consulted, and what we can do, what I can do, is go back through that list, because I raised—you raised the eyes whether or not we consulted with the representative—

Mr. MORAN. There is only one representative at the Federal level directly responsible. There is one person. The first person you should have seen is looking right at you, and we just heard from

this person that the substance of discussion, consultation, was grossly inadequate, if it even existed.

Ms. NORTON. If the gentleman would yield, no Member was told ahead of time that the avenue would be closed down, unless you consider the few hours' notice that I had ahead of time. And the whole notion that you want to provide us with a list of people who were ultimately told or who were briefed ahead of time and told the decision had not been made gets us back to where we were before, because I concede that people came around talking to us all about what could happen, but then said, we have made no decision to do that. And that, of course, is not consultation, and certainly none of those people that you have referred to said, go ahead and do it.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you.

Mr. DAVIS. We will let you supplement that if you would like.

Mr. JOHNSON. Right. Rather than—

Mr. DAVIS. Without objection, that is probably the easier way to do it.

Mr. JOHNSON. Right.

Mr. DAVIS. The gentleman's time has expired.

Let me just try to wrap this up quickly. I just have a couple of comments and questions, and I think Ms. Norton does. And then we will move on to the next panel.

First of all, again, thank you for coming. Mr. Bowron, you are doing your job. You want your Secret Service to give you every option to keep it safe. The decisions then have to be a balance.

In this case, I don't think that they looked or even recognize what it would mean for Clean Air Act compliance and the burden it would put on the rest of the region in terms of the pollution that's coming out of this, and we have some evidence now that it is an unintended consequence of this action—what it would do to the city businesses economically that are clustered around there. This is a key economic development quarter for the city and there's some evidence that it has hurt business in that area, and we are going to hear from some of those businesses today. And third, what that does to the city in terms of the direct impact on its budget.

And wouldn't you agree that the city should be made whole under those situations? This is a city that is desperate right now financially; they are trying to hold on to every dollar they can. Can't we at least agree, if this is going to be made, at least the city ought to be made whole?

Mr. BOWRON. Mr. Chairman, I can—

Mr. DAVIS. I know that you don't make that decision, but if you were in a position, don't you think that's fair?

Mr. BOWRON. That's a decision that I don't make. I come up here and testify before Congress for every dollar the Secret Service gets, and I can tell every dollar has got an assignment, and every one has got to be justified, and I think that the Secret Service will always work with the—

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Bowron, in this case, whatever you do to implement this, these dollars are coming out of the city. They are coming out of the merchants of the city. If we had to take those dollars out of your budget, in other words, cut your budget in other places to reimburse the city, would it be such a keen idea?

Mr. BOWRON. I can tell you without hesitation that there are things that are in our budget that if they had to go unfunded, it would be a tremendous blow to the Secret Service, and it would affect our protective mission. But Pennsylvania Avenue being closed to vehicular traffic outweighs a lot of them in terms of the priority. If not—

Mr. DAVIS. Go ahead. That's fair. That's a fair comment, and I think you have given it your priority within that. You would let other things go before this, you rank it that high.

Mr. BOWRON. That's right.

Mr. DAVIS. But can't we agree, and let me ask Mr. Johnson the same thing, that the city is, in this case in dire financial straits, we have got this interagency task force, we have so many people wanting to do good for the city; Congress wants to do good, and then they can't get the budget on time because they won't do it; and we have the same thing here with the administration—a lot of lip-service. We want to do this, help this and coordinate here, but the city ends up paying it. If we can—if nothing else—get an agreement here to try to make the city whole and some of these businesses whole, I think that would lessen the adverse impact that is felt from this.

Mr. JOHNSON. With respect to the—what's being done—

Mr. DAVIS. It is not your money you are committing here if you think it's a good idea. But I mean fairness just says this is the way it ought to run.

Mr. JOHNSON. One, with respect to what we are doing with—because we are, the administration is, concerned with what's—what's happening with this city. I can tell you, one, what has been done with respect to Treasury; that is, that more than half a billion dollars in loans, I believe the figure is \$526 million in loans, have been advanced, and I don't know exactly within which time period, to the—

Mr. DAVIS. Right, but that's not related to this closing.

Mr. JOHNSON. The other issue—

Mr. DAVIS. Treasury has been great working with us on some of the legislation, no question. Nice try.

Mr. JOHNSON. We are taking a hit for this one.

Mr. DAVIS. All right. I think you have answered that.

It just seems to me that there is a balance here, and security is important. I think every one of us, if some incident were to occur, wouldn't want to have any part of the consequence, agreed? But there are other ramifications.

I don't know if you interviewed President Carter or President Ford as the President, but they have both, as Senator Grams said today, now called for the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue. And they have a perspective on this as well as former residents of this.

Clean Air Act compliance is made more difficult by this decision. We are going to hear today a little bit more about the cost to the city and the cost to businesses today. I think there are a lot of undotted I's and uncrossed T's, and we will get back to you at the conclusion of this and try to rework this. So I appreciate your being here today, and I know Ms. Norton does too.

Ms. Norton, I will let you wrap up.

Ms. NORTON. Just for the record, the loans to the Capital City of the United States, when it is insolvent, for which it is paying interest, is an obligation imposed on Treasury by the Congress of the United States and not a quid pro quo for closing Pennsylvania Avenue and should never be so cited. If anything, dealing with Treasury on those loans has been far worse than dealing with private banks and others.

Treasury has not exactly been generous in the way in which it has treated the District, but has tried to lock every door it can to make it as difficult as it can in the borrowing and in the legislation itself. So it is a very sore point with me when you cite the loans to the District and the authority legislation, since, very frankly, the Treasury was the most recalcitrant of all the actors up here in fashioning the authority legislation to make sure that the District was saved from total insolvency, and certainly to cite it in connection with the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is particularly outrageous since the two were never connected and since the obligation was imposed solely by the Congress of the United States, and Treasury had absolutely no choice once that obligation was imposed.

I do not—Mr. Bowron, I do not dispute that the statutes of the United States give the Secret Service the right to do many things on a temporary basis, including closing streets. I would like for you or Mr. Johnson to cite any legal authority which gives you the right to permanently close Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mr. DAVIS. If you have it, great. If you want to submit it for the record, that would be fine.

Ms. NORTON. Well, let me cite it, first. I mean, if he asks to submit it for the record, Mr. Chairman, don't coach the witness. The man has closed Pennsylvania Avenue. I am asking him to cite the legal authority here and now for closing Pennsylvania Avenue on a permanent basis. And if he has got to give me the—if he didn't come here with that in hand—

Mr. DAVIS. Technically they haven't closed Pennsylvania Avenue. They have restricted vehicular access. A closing is a different legal activity, and I think she is asking—

Ms. NORTON. What is your legal authority for restricting vehicular access on a permanent basis on Pennsylvania Avenue? If the chairman insists that I rephrase my question.

Mr. JOHNSON. I would start with title 18, United States Code, section 3056. I believe there are some D.C. Circuit or at least one D.C. Circuit case that also supports this decision. But I would, to make sure that the answer is accurate—most accurate and the legal authorities are fully set forth, ask for permission to submit this as part of the—part of the record.

Mr. DAVIS. Without objection.

But let me just ask, are these temporary closings or permanent? I think there is a legal distinction, and if you are prepared to address that now, I think we would appreciate hearing it. If not, when you come forward with the information, I think that's a clear legal difference. And it's our judgment from here—and we are willing to be persuaded and talk to you—that you cannot permanently close it without going through the city council.

Mr. JOHNSON. OK. I would ask for permission to submit a full brief on that point.

Mr. DAVIS. Without objection.

Ms. NORTON. I would like the legal authority for permanent closing. I concede absolutely that the Secret Service can do whatever it wants to on a temporary basis to protect the President, or virtually whatever it wants to.

Mr. Johnson, have you ever heard of the power of eminent domain?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. NORTON. Do you believe that that power should obtain against the—under the Constitution of the United States, obtains against the United States of America?

Mr. JOHNSON. As I understand it, and it has been about 14 years since I studied property law, eminent domain applies to the taking of the property of another. And in this case, the property that we are talking about, Pennsylvania Avenue, is a street that's owned by the U.S. Government. So we are not taking.

Ms. NORTON. Is it your position—I am quite aware of that. It is your position that as long as the U.S. Government owns it, even though the jurisdiction by law is under the District of Columbia, that the U.S. Government may take any land whatsoever without compensating the District of Columbia? Is that your position?

Mr. JOHNSON. My position is not that stark. I was responding simply to the eminent domain issue. But with respect to the taking or with respect to the issue of reimbursement of the District of Columbia, it's my understanding that the task force will be considering those issues and will obviously be informed by a lot of the facts that are going to be developed during this hearing and continuing dialog with the Congress and with the District.

Ms. NORTON. I would ask within the next week to hear what the—what is the agenda of the work planned on the question of compensation for the District of Columbia. I would just like to know; not what the answer is, but what the agenda is and how they intend to handle that. And I wish you would contact my office on that matter.

Mr. DAVIS. Can you do that, do you think, Mr. Johnson?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes; I will.

Ms. NORTON. One final question for Mr. Bowron.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Johnson, if you could talk to the subcommittee as well as Ms. Norton's office, I think it's important.

We share your interest, Ms. Norton.

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes; Mr. Chairman.

Ms. NORTON. I am sorry. I should have said that myself.

On May 3, 1996, I wrote to Secretary Rubin with a copy to the President of the United States, as well as to Mr. Bowron, concerning the activities of the Secret Service uniformed police wherein they were to cease law enforcement activities in the District of Columbia and focus exclusively on protecting Federal facilities under their jurisdiction, apparently refraining even from routine uniform policing, including the enforcement of D.C. laws when they saw a crime in the commission.

In that letter, for which I have received no reply, I asked for clarification and indicated that the order seemed to be at odds with the

President's directive to Federal agencies to give all aid and assistance to the District government. Could you clarify what the present position of the Secret Service now is concerning the law enforcement role of its uniformed police in the District of Columbia?

Mr. BOWRON. Yes; our uniformed division is a very important component of our Office of Protective Operations, and in order for them to perform their protective responsibilities for the Secret Service, our uniformed division has to have authority to enforce laws within the District of Columbia.

It has always been the policy of the Secret Service that in the conduct of their duties with respect to our protective mission, that they should support the Metropolitan Police Department and the citizens of the District of Columbia in the enforcement of laws, particularly with respect to serious crimes and crimes that are committed in their presence. That policy has not changed. That policy is not going to change. But what we do from time to time is we reinforce the policy with respect to our own protective mission and heighten the sense of priority that we think is necessary for our mission and to complete our mission. But in no way is that intended to say, don't respond to the citizens of Columbia, don't back up the Metropolitan Police Department, don't enforce infractions of serious law and crimes committed in your presence. That is not our policy. It is not going to be our policy, and as a matter of fact, you know, if you go back over the last 10 months, not only have we not said that they should not do that, we have recognized several officers with valor awards for the efforts they have made on behalf of the citizens of the District of Columbia and in support of the Metropolitan Police Department. So we have recognized them and applauded their efforts, but at the same time we do not want there to be any misunderstanding about the sense of mission with respect to their responsibilities for the Secret Service's mission.

Ms. NORTON. So long as you are assuring me that they can carry out the responsibilities they have always carried out with respect to arrests in the District of Columbia, I very much appreciate that.

Mr. BOWRON. In 1995, Congresswoman Norton, I think you may know, we made in the area of 1,500 arrests in the District of Columbia.

Ms. NORTON. Well, in fact, I do know. In fact, Mr. Bowron, if I may say so, for all of my concern about the Pennsylvania Avenue, the uniformed Secret Service police have been very helpful to the District of Columbia, and it came as a real shock that there would be anybody within the Secret Service who would pull that back at a time when our own police numbers are down and our own crime up. So I very much appreciate your—your commitment.

Could I finally just ask, Mr. Johnson, as you go back to the D.C. Task Force, to note that in today's paper, as Mr. Moran has called to my attention, Metro, which is facing horrendous cuts here, has found that the closing has cost Metro almost \$300 million?

Mr. MORAN. \$300,000.

Ms. NORTON. I am sorry, \$300,000, because apparently more buses are necessary to maintain their on-schedule commitments. And the District has lost nearly \$100,000 in revenue because of parking meters that are gone, and again nobody seems to be in charge of all of this.

These things do need to be put before not simply a bunch of very well-meaning and hard-working subofficials, but somebody somewhere has to make a decision one way or the other about these matters. And if that is not done, I can assure you that lawsuits are going to follow.

And I do not understand why people who live in the District of Columbia should have to sue the Federal Government. We are all in the same boat, and the President is a Democrat. We are Democrats, most of us. I would hate it to come to that, but that is what is heating up here unless we can get some answers on this revenue, which the District simply cannot afford to lose at this time more than any other in its history.

So I would ask that those be put on the table inasmuch as you are getting back to us within a week to tell us what the agenda is on these matters that we have raised.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you.

Anything else anybody wants to add at this point? I know you would like to stay, but we have other panelists that we need to hear from.

Thank you both for, I think, an informative morning, and I know you will be supplementing some of your statements. We look forward to a continuing dialog.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you.

Mr. DAVIS. I am now pleased to introduce our third panel, Mr. John Strauchs, who is the CEO of SYSTECH Group, Inc. Mr. Strauchs is a security expert, a former CIA employee. Among his current clients is the Treasury Department.

Mr. Strauchs, the rules of the committee require that all witnesses be sworn. And I know you have other things to do, but we want to get your testimony on the record. Ms. Norton has requested that, and I think it's very important we do that. We probably won't keep you too long on the questions, but we may have some, and look forward to hearing you.

[Witness sworn.]

STATEMENT OF JOHN J. STRAUCHS, CEO, SYSTECH GROUP, INC., RESTON, VA

Mr. DAVIS. You can proceed when you are ready. Any written statement you have will be entered in the record.

Mr. STRAUCHS. Yes. I am going to follow my written statement, but try to elaborate some since anybody else can read it.

Since I have no doubt you are not aware of me, just by way of background I have worked in the fields of intelligence and security for more than 30 years. I assisted in enhancing security to New York City World Trade Center for 2 years following the bombing, and I am currently working as a consultant for two Federal agencies in the development of appropriate national security design criteria in response to both the World Trade Center bombing as well as the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995.

I have made a career out of designing security countermeasures for the public and private sectors. My company, SYSTECH Group, is an engineering firm that specializes exclusively in the fields of security, fire protection, and life safety, and communications con-

sulting and engineering. I have lived in the Washington, DC metropolitan region since 1970.

It is my view that the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is unwarranted because this countermeasure to terroristic threats is not sufficiently meaningful and because less disruptive and less expensive alternative countermeasures are available, presumably.

I have the utmost respect for the U.S. Secret Service and the valiant and steadfast service this esteemed organization has provided to the Government of the United States. Had I been engaged by the Secret Service to assess whether closing Pennsylvania Avenue in the vicinity of the White House is warranted, I have no doubt that I would have concurred with their recommendations—their recommendations from their very focused perspective.

It is important to remember, however, that their mission includes protecting the President of the United States as well as to be the strongest possible advocate in defending any policies that further that mission. Others, however, are compelled out of a similar sense of duty to view policies from entirely different perspectives, such as the resulting effects on the District of Columbia and on the public image of the capital of the strongest Nation on this Earth, the world's brightest symbol of democracy.

In evaluating the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, there are two essential questions that must be answered. The first question is: Does the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue result in a meaningful reduction of risk to the White House? The second question is: Are there practical and reasonable alternatives that could provide a comparable reduction in risk?

In understanding security, in the security profession, risks can be said to be composed of three and possibly four components: Threat, vulnerability, consequences and, to the extent that it can be quantified, probability. Risks, therefore, can be effectively reduced by mitigating or eliminating threat sources, vulnerability to acts by threat sources, the consequences of successful acts, as well as the probability of an event occurring.

The best results are achieved when all risk components can be reduced. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is intended to prevent death or injury to occupants of the White House and others resulting from a terrorist detonating a massive conventional bomb from Pennsylvania Avenue. This countermeasure reduces both vulnerability and consequences. It has no appreciable effect on the threat component of risk, and in my view its effects on vulnerability and on consequences are not sufficiently significant to offset the negative aspects of this decision.

Separating a target from a probable point of detonation is termed "set-back" in the security profession. Just as the intensity of light is inversely proportional to the square of the distance from the source, or a cube of the distance in the case of three-dimensional space, so too the effect of the overpressure caused by a large conventional bomb is dramatically reduced by even small, incremental increases in set-back.

The first question: Is the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue meaningful risk reduction? As noted, the White House had a very significant set-back from public roadways before the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. According to news accounts, I understand it's in excess

of 300 feet. In evaluating if this particular countermeasure is sufficiently meaningful, it is essential to view risk in an absolutely comprehensive way. Measures to protect the White House against only one type of attack do not address all risks to the White House. If it does not address all risks, then the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue should not be evaluated solely on the basis of how effective this decision is in reducing only one kind of risk, but it should be evaluated on a basis of what proportion of overall risk reduction does it achieve against all types of risk.

When all risks are considered, the totality of the threat, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, does not seem to have much impact on risk.

There are many threat sources that could threaten the White House, some of which are potentially far more devastating than the remote detonation of an explosive device on a city street. As others have noted, it would be inappropriate to review these other threat sources in an open hearing, but it would not be difficult for anyone who follows world news to imagine what these other events might entail. Should another tragedy such as occurred in Oklahoma City happen somewhere else, and in the same or even larger scale, it is quite probable that the methods used may be entirely different. The next Oklahoma City may not be a fertilizer bomb at all.

Another consideration in deciding this issue is whether the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is a uniform policy that is equally enforced at all other buildings and structures of comparable significance and target attractiveness. It is not. Both the real and the symbolic value of the White House and the importance of human life cannot be overstated. But if a terrorist were unable to attack the White House because Pennsylvania Avenue was closed, would he or she give up? How less important and less significant is the Capitol or the National Archives or the State Department or many other Federal and city buildings and monuments? If the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue can be truly justified by the importance of what is being protected, then it stands to reason that all other comparable targets must be equally protected. How many more streets are to be closed if this line of reasoning is followed to its obvious conclusions?

Seeing this reasoning from yet another perspective, how much sense would it make to install a steel door in the front of your house and a cardboard door in the back? Closing Pennsylvania Avenue is the steel door in the District of Columbia.

In a similar vein, if the District of Columbia cannot for many reasons tolerate the prohibition of all parking of vehicles beneath buildings that may be occupied by Federal agencies despite the obvious risk reductions—the reduction benefits of such a policy, how can the closing of a street so removed from the target be justified? A cardinal principle of security systems design is the uniform application of security countermeasures. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is not a uniform application of security countermeasures.

The second question: Are there meaningful countermeasures as alternatives? It is important for this subcommittee to focus on macro issues on this matter. It would not be productive at this time to go into a great detail about alternative countermeasures.

In summary, however, important countermeasures that may achieve comparable or even better results include, but are not limited to, the following—it is not intended, by the way, that all the following concepts would need to be implemented, only a few of them. One concept, create a no truck/no bus zone in the vicinity of the White House and other government buildings and monuments. Require critical deliveries to be reloaded into smaller vehicles. Require special permits. Provide special markings or codes on vehicles on a daily basis that change on a daily basis to identify that certain delivery vehicles are essential or allowed to enter the zone. On selected streets, but not every street, construct overhead height barriers that might prevent very large vehicles from entering certain areas or along certain streets. Provide attractive energy-absorbing barriers to reduce overpressures or to reduce—redirect overpressures from detonated devices. Construct the barriers away from public roadways. Install conspicuous closed-circuit television cameras throughout the area. Provide continuous time-lapsed video recording of all traffic and all activity in the area. This would aid investigations, but more importantly, it would serve as a very meaningful deterrent to those activities.

In summary, as was so very eloquently stated by Washington's most notable architect, Mr. Arthur Cotton Moore, years ago, when the White House was ringed by sand trucks and large concrete planters following the threats to the White House by Mr. Qadhafi, Mr. Arthur Cotton Moore stated we have just delivered the terrorists their first victory.

The Federal District of Columbia is the face of America, visited by millions of Americans and foreign visitors every year. My question is: What sort of face do we want to show the world?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Strauchs follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN J. STRAUCHS, CEO, SYSTECH GROUP, INC., RESTON, VA

QUALIFICATIONS

My qualifications to address this Subcommittee on this matter are the following. In summary, I have worked in the fields of intelligence and security for more than thirty years. I assisted in enhancing security at the New York City World Trade Center for two years following the bombing of the Center. Most recently, I work for several Federal agencies as a consultant to help in the development of appropriate national security design criteria in response to both the World Trade Center bombing, as well as the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. I have made a career out of designing security countermeasures for the public and private sectors. My company, Systech Group, is an engineering firm that specializes in the fields of security, fire protection, life safety, and communications consulting and engineering. I have lived in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area since 1970.

OVERVIEW

It is my view that the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is unwarranted because this countermeasure to terroristic threats is not sufficiently meaningful and because less disruptive and less expensive alternative countermeasures are available.

I have the utmost respect for the U.S. Secret Service and the valiant and steadfast service this esteemed organization has provided to the Government of the United States. Had I been engaged by the Secret Service to assess whether the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in the vicinity of the White House is warranted, I have no doubt that I would have concurred with their recommendations. It is important to remember, however, that their mission includes protecting the President of the

United States, as well as to be the strongest possible advocate in defending any policies that further that mission. Others, however, are compelled out of a similar sense of duty to view policies from entirely different perspectives, such as the resulting effects on the District of Columbia and on the public image of the capital of the strongest nation on this earth, the world's brightest symbol of democracy. In evaluating the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, there are two essential questions that must be answered. The first question is, does the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue result in a meaningful reduction in risk to the White House. The second question is, are there practical and reasonable alternatives that could provide a comparable reduction in risk to the White House.

UNDERSTANDING RISK

In the security profession, "risk" can be said to be composed of three, and possibly four, components: threat, vulnerability, consequences, and to the extent that it can be qualified, probability. Risk, therefore, can be effectively reduced by mitigating or eliminating threat sources, vulnerability to acts by threat sources, the consequences of successful acts, as well as the probability of an event occurring. The best results are achieved when all risk components can be reduced.

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is intended to prevent death or injury to occupants of the White House, and to others, resulting from a terrorist detonating a massive conventional bomb from Pennsylvania Avenue. This countermeasure reduces both vulnerability and consequences. It has no appreciable effect on the threat component of risk and, in my view, its effects on vulnerability and consequences are not sufficiently significant to offset the negative aspects of this decision.

Separating a target from a probable point of detonation is termed set-back in the security profession. Just as the intensity of light is inversely proportional to the square of the distance from the source, so too the effect of the overpressure caused by a large conventional bomb is dramatically reduced by even small incremental increases in set-back.

IS THE CLOSING OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE MEANINGFUL RISK REDUCTION?

As noted, the White House had a very significant set-back from public roadways before the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. In evaluating whether this particular countermeasure is sufficiently meaningful, it is essential to view risk in an absolutely comprehensive way. Measures to protect the White House against only one type of attack do not address all risks to the White House. If it does not address all risks, then the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue should not be evaluated solely on the basis of how effective this decision is reducing only one type of risk, but should be evaluated on the basis of what proportion of overall risk reduction does it achieve against all types of risks. When all risks are considered, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has a much lower impact on risk.

There are many threat sources that could threaten the White House, some of which are potentially far more devastating than the remote detonation of an explosive device on a city street. It would be inappropriate to review these other threat sources in an open hearing, but it would not be difficult for anyone who follows world news to imagine what these other events might entail. Should another tragedy such as occurred in Oklahoma City happen somewhere else, and in the same or even larger scale, it is quite probable that the methods used may be entirely different. The next Oklahoma City may not be a "fertilizer" bomb at all.

Another consideration in deciding this issue is whether the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is a uniform policy that is equally enforced at all other buildings and structures of comparable significance and target attractiveness. It is not! Both the real and the symbolic value of the White House and the importance of human life cannot be overstated. But, if a terrorist were unable to attack the White House because Pennsylvania Avenue was closed, would he or she give up? How less important and less significant is the Capital, or the National Archives, or the State Department, or many other Federal and City buildings and monuments? If the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue can truly be justified by the importance of what is being protected, then it stands to reason that all other comparable targets must be equally protected. How many more streets are to be closed if this line of reasoning is followed to its obvious conclusion? Seeing this reasoning from another perspective, how much sense would be made to install a steel door in the front of your house and a cardboard door in the back? In a similar vein, if the District of Columbia cannot, for many reasons, tolerate the prohibition of parking vehicles underneath buildings occupied by Federal agencies—despite the obvious risk reduction benefits of such a policy—how can the closing of a street so removed from the target be justified? A cardinal principle of security systems design is the uniform application of security

countermeasures. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is not a uniform application of security countermeasures.

ARE THERE MEANINGFUL ALTERNATIVE COUNTERMEASURES?

It is important for this Subcommittee to focus on the macro issues in this matter. It would not be productive at this time to go into great detail about alternative countermeasures. In summary, however, important countermeasures that may achieve comparable or even better results include, but are not limited to, the following. It is not intended that all of the following concepts would need to be implemented—only a few.

Create “no truck—no bus” zones in the vicinity of the White House and other important governmental buildings and monuments. Require critical deliveries to be re-loaded into smaller vehicles. Require special permits and special markings or codes that change daily for large vehicles that must enter the zone.

On selected streets (not on every street), construct physical height barriers that would prevent large vehicles from entering certain areas.

Provide attractive, energy-absorbing barriers to reduce overpressures. Construct the barriers away from public roadways.

Install conspicuous closed-circuit television cameras throughout the area. Provide continuous, time-lapsed video recording of all traffic and activity in the area. This would aid investigations, but more importantly, it would serve as a very meaningful deterrent.

SUMMARY

As so eloquently stated by one of Washington's most notable architects, Mr. Arthur Cotton Moore, years ago when the White House was ringed by sand trucks and large concrete planters following threats from Libya, “We have just delivered the terrorists their first victory.” The Federal District of Columbia is the face of America, visited by millions of Americans and foreign visitors each year. What sort of face do we want to show the world?

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN J. STRAUCHS,
CEO, Systech Group, Inc.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Strauchs, thank you very much for being with us. I am going to yield to Ms. Norton for a couple questions, and then I will have a couple questions. Thank you.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Strauchs, would you elaborate on the notion of prohibiting trucks if you are—if you—if there's a high volume of traffic, remember this is a very wide street with a high volume of traffic, how would you enforce that?

Mr. STRAUCHS. Well, the—by the way, these concepts are very general. They are at macro level. I mean, if any of them were to be implemented, a great deal of planning and design work would have to be preceding any implementation. But my idea would not be to exclude all trucks. My idea would be to exclude only very large trucks, very large trucks that could carry a lot of materials that could be harmful in a detonation. I wouldn't preclude small trucks. Now what the difference is between large and small, I think, would have to be worked out later.

Second, I think that even small trucks would have to be regulated, and there my idea would be to create a permit program. That is, if you have a business in that area, and you have a contract for scheduled deliveries, part of that contract then would have to be is that they have to seek a permit from the District, or other jurisdiction as may apply, in order to enter this no truck zone. And in that case, in practices that are already familiar to the Secret Service, they could have special markings on a daily basis so that any police officer or any law enforcement officer could quickly determine whether that vehicle has a reasonable chance of being prop-

erly licensed to be in that area. But the basic premise is to keep very large vehicles, trucks and large buses, out of that area.

Ms. NORTON. But do you need a large vehicle in order to set off one of these bombs?

Mr. STRAUCHS. No, but you need a large vehicle to set off a terrible bomb.

Ms. NORTON. I see. To what extent do you think the National Park Service's proposal to essentially make Pennsylvania Avenue a park, to what extent would that lessen the vulnerability of the White House to damage by explosive devices? Would that be effective in doing so?

Mr. STRAUCHS. It would be effective in curtailing damage from large conventional explosive devices, yes, it would, but only from that perspective.

Ms. NORTON. What kind of threats do you think would remain then?

Mr. STRAUCHS. I am not sure, again, as I say, in an open hearing how much I really should go into that. It's not that anything that I say is not knowable or that you don't already know, but there is a certain problem with people getting ideas from certain concepts being mentioned. But there are alternatives to large conventional explosives that I personally think are potentially far more dangerous. All you have to do, for example, is look to experiences in other countries, for example, like Japan.

Ms. NORTON. You stress the need to look at all of the threats before moving on a particular threat like closing—like vehicular traffic, for example. Are you suggesting that closing Pennsylvania Avenue might heighten the threats to other sites that terrorists might seek?

Mr. STRAUCHS. Yes, Congresswoman Norton, there's no question about that. Crime is never extinguished. Crime is simply displaced. The same applies for terrorism. We simply displace them.

Ms. NORTON. So in effect we could simply be leading or guiding the—

Mr. STRAUCHS. I have no doubt that if somebody was intent on harming the White House, that if we closed one means, all we would simply do is force them to another alternative route or method.

Ms. NORTON. Do you believe that lowering the surface of the roadway a few feet would reduce the vulnerability of the White House to a car bomb in particular?

Mr. STRAUCHS. If it's done in a—if it's engineered, it would, yes, ma'am. Now, I don't—wouldn't advocate that personally, but that is one effective way of doing it. The best way, of course, is to dig a tunnel.

Ms. NORTON. Yes.

One more question. I'm interested in what you say about the effect of the set—of the fact of set-back from the road. Would you elaborate on that? Do you think that that essentially protects the White House from most of the damage that is of concern here?

Mr. STRAUCHS. To my knowledge, I have read every guideline or suggested guideline related to countermeasures to terrorist acts that currently exist in the United States, and I am not aware of one that requires a set-back greater than about 200 feet. One of the

reasons for that is, of course, we are talking about an urban environment, and 200 feet in an urban environment is hard to get. So if a target has more than 200 feet, which, as I understand, the distance between Pennsylvania Avenue and the White House is at least 300 feet, that already exceeds every guideline that I am aware of that is being planned or drafted.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much. I find your testimony very helpful. We need something to compare all of this with, and we do it in other areas, and I don't know why we should not do it in this instance as well.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Strauchs, thank you very much. Ms. Norton has taken most of my questions. I just want to ask is there any other way to deflect a car bomb or an explosion like that? Obviously lowering the level of the pavement does that. Distance does that.

Mr. STRAUCHS. There are two ways. One is you can actually redirect overpressures by constructing devices that redirect. If you could think of it as an ocean wave, and all the power an ocean wave has, it's not dissimilar. So you can construct devices that will move the ocean wave in other areas, in other directions.

Second, you can absorb energy. When the first bombing of LaGuardia Airport occurred that achieved national attention, when the bomb was placed inside of lockers inside the airport. Not long after that the appropriate authorities, they were concerned about security at airports. FAA in particular, but others as well, were involved with a company right out of Belair, MD, as I recall, called Shielding Technologies, and they developed the mechanism of taking I-beams and offsetting the I-beams and then putting them around some kind of attractive skin so that it doesn't look like what it appears to be. Now, I am not saying that still is necessarily attractive.

Mr. DAVIS. No; I understand that.

Mr. STRAUCHS. But it absorbs the energy. The blast moves the heavy I-beams. And they, in fact, were in place, I believe, at the airport for quite some time, and then I believe later again removed. But anyway, there are things that could be investigated that would take a lot of the punch out of the impact, yes, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. And just judging from the testimony today, does it appear there may be more innovative ways we could look at to try and accomplish the same result?

Mr. STRAUCHS. In my view, the combination of the extreme long set-back they already have and these alternatives, particularly barriers, it could be made attractive. All risk is managed. It is never reduced. In my view, that would be an acceptable managed risk level.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. STRAUCHS. Thank you.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much. It's an important part of the testimony today. We appreciate you bearing with us.

Mr. STRAUCHS. Thank you very much.

Mr. DAVIS. I would now like to call our fourth panel of witnesses, District Mayor Marion Barry, and City Administrator Michael Rogers, and Department of Public Works Director Larry King. As all of you know, it is the policy of this committee that all witnesses be sworn before they may testify.

Would you please rise with me and raise your right hands? If you could raise Mr. Rogers' hand for him since he is not here yet. We will get him in.

[Witnesses sworn.]

STATEMENTS OF MARION BARRY, MAYOR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; MICHAEL ROGERS, CITY ADMINISTRATOR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; AND LARRY KING, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much for being here today.

Mr. Mayor, we will start with you. You have heard some of the testimony previous to this, and we very much appreciate your taking time to come here. I know this is an interest of great concern to the city.

Mr. BARRY. Good morning, Chairman Davis, Mrs. Norton, staff of the Congressman. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you this morning. Mr. Rogers, unfortunately, I would like to enter his statement into the record. He has a full plate today, and I will carry on in his stead.

Mr. DAVIS. Without objection, that statement will be put in the record.

Mr. BARRY. With me is Larry King, the director of the Department of Public Works.

Mr. Chairman, I think that in terms of this whole issue, part of it is philosophy, and part of it is reality. And over 200 years ago, L'Enfant designed the layout of our city that has been the main-stay of our city. It was very carefully thought out in terms of the executive branch of government and the legislative branch of government being in alignment, and Pennsylvania was an integral part of that situation.

And it also goes without saying that Washington, DC is the Nation's Capital, international capital, and America is the strongest democracy anywhere in the world, and that is what bothers me, obviously, is the symbolism that goes with having to ward off the President, ward off the White House from vehicular traffic and from its citizens.

None of us would want nothing but accurate and adequate protection for the President and for the physical structure called the White House. As an elected official, I know that there are dangers out there and that there are demented people, there are deranged people and others. But without knowing enough about the technical parts of it, there has to be other ways to protect the President when he is in the White House and other ways to protect the White House.

Also, Mr. Chairman, there's some contention about who owns the street. I was just talking to Larry King about that. We certainly have use of it, have had use of it for the last 150, 175 years. On the question of title and ownership, it was our view that—we had a case called Glendale versus the U.S. Government in Maryland where we had had use of a piece of Federal land for a long period of time, and the courts ruled in our favor that because of the use of it for that period of time, it de facto was our land. And we, in fact, sold that land to Prince George's County, and we went to look

at that. But more importantly, Mr. Chairman, is the process that was involved with this.

On May 19, 1995, I received an urgent call from the Secretary of the Treasury. He was out of the city, and we finally located him. He informed me that the very next morning that Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Street, NW., and westbound E Street, NW., behind the White House would be closed permanently to traffic as of early Saturday morning. Now, this is Friday night, May 19. And as Washington and the whole world arose, they found the Nation's main street barricaded to all vehicular traffic. To the credit of our Department of Public Works, they worked all weekend trying to make the adjustments, trying to eliminate some of the confusion.

Let me say that the weekday traffic impact here has been devastating. There are an average of 26,000 vehicles that use those two routes—use Pennsylvania Avenue on a daily basis—and so when you add the 12,000 vehicles that once used E Street, we are talking about suddenly 38,000 vehicles were clogging D Street, H Street, I Street, K Street, L Street. These streets were already at or above their own capacities. For tourists and visitors, residents and commuters, the most scenic byway of the District suddenly was barricaded.

In an attempt to minimize the impact of the closings, as I said earlier, the Department of Public Works worked all weekend, on overtime I might add—and you know how strapped we are. We need every nickel we can get—installing detour signs and initially stripping parking on 15th Street, 17th Street, H Street, I Street, which means we were to take up the—eventually remove the parking meter income from those streets.

After several weeks of observing the flow of traffic displaced from Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street, DPW June 24 and 25 changed H Street, I Street and 15th Street to one-way operations to better facilitate traffic. Traffic signals, signage and pavement markings were installed.

It goes without saying that there should have been some consultation about it the next morning. Now, I understand you don't want to notify the world about it, but I'm not the world, and Mr. King is not the world, so at least we could have prepared internally for us to deal with it. We got enough problems to deal with without having this added burden to us. So there was no consultation. Let the record show, there was no consultation. The Secretary of the Treasury told me what they were going to do. I had no choice except to listen and say, thank you, Mr. Secretary, I don't like it, and hung up the telephone. That's how it happened.

And then the Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration hired a traffic consultant, an engineering firm of Barton Ashman, to identify the transportation and traffic impacts. They also were charged with evaluating the changes made by DPW.

Mr. King just told me that the draft report was just released this morning. We haven't even had a chance to look at it, but preliminarily it doesn't go far enough. It doesn't look at the economic impact of the area. It doesn't look at the traffic beyond certain small areas. We had given them our input into what it ought to be, but

it was controlled by the Federal Highway Administration. So, therefore, we were not able to do that.

Also, early on the Federal Highway Administration authorized the District to spend \$408,000 of our Federal aid transportation appropriations on the changes to the road system. On the other hand, Mr. Chairman, Ms. Norton, with the subsequent passage by the Congress of the District of Columbia Emergency Highway Relief Act for 1995, which waived the District's Federal aid transportation, this money was lost to the District for that purpose. And so, therefore, any costs of the changes of the street signs and et cetera, has, it's my understanding, been borne by the District.

Let me just say unequivocally that rush hour delays have continued to increase, despite the establishment of the one-way traffic patterns. Midday traffic backs up on several streets surrounding the closed segments. We have heard from many individuals, or hear from others, the D.C. Building Industry Association, the Greater Washington Board of Trade, the D.C. Chamber of Commerce, ANC commissioners and several downtown business associations about the negative impact of the closing on their activity.

This closing has had an adverse economic impact on us. When businesses lose income in that immediate area, the District loses tax income either through sales taxes or property taxes or a combination of other taxes.

Several landlords reported that many of their tenants have complained that the closure has made getting to the offices and conducting business extremely difficult. Traffic has made it very odious to anyone to conduct business along 14th Street, 15th Street, 17th Street, H Street, I Street, New York Avenue, and Pennsylvania Avenue near the closed intersections.

I have been told that commuters who ride Metro buses and other commuter vehicles have had to deal with chronic delays. Taxi drivers have lost time, and therefore customers, and many businesses are questioning the wisdom of staying in a high rent district, having your customers unable to reach your business.

Mr. Chairman, Ms. Norton, this situation is very difficult for the District. As you know, we are undertaking a major transformation of our government. We are transforming the government to a leaner, more responsive and business-friendly entity, and a critical element of the transformation is attraction of new wealth and businesses downtown. And the Pennsylvania Avenue area is an important business area, a very important business district, and the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is an obstacle to transforming the District in terms of trying to keep businesses in our city.

The District of Columbia government and our residents enjoy being the global seat of power. As I said earlier, the safety of the President is important, but on the other hand, there has to be another way.

The other thing—other point I would like to make, Mr. Chairman, and Ms. Norton, is that, and I am going to say this very carefully, I am a strong supporter of President Clinton. I am a Democrat. I am going to be at the convention as one of the cochairs, and I am going to vote for the President. But on the other hand, in this instance, President Clinton needs to stand to the front of the line. Other Presidents have stood to the front of the line. He should not

say, I am relying on the Secret Service's recommendation. He has a responsibility to the people of America and the people of Washington to say, I want this, I don't want this, as has Presidents Ford, Carter, Reagan, and every President who has been asked that question.

And so I would hope our President would not continue to say, let's leave it to the Secret Service to do this. The Secret Service for the last 40 years has been trying to close this avenue. They are hell-bent on doing it, and they will use any excuses, any means, to try to do it. So our President, President Clinton, who I support, ought to come to the front of the line and insist on either if he wants it done, say, I want it done, so we can then have another kind of debate and not let this sort of drag on between a debate between the Congress and the Mayor and the citizens and the Secret Service.

The Secret Service weren't elected for anything. They were selected to be the protector of the President. They were selected to be the protector of embassies and others and to take care of other extreme business that happens here.

So, in summary, by now you know that I am unequivocally opposed to the permanent closure of Pennsylvania Avenue. We need our main street open. Young people coming from around the world and from around America ought not to see a bastion of a White House far removed from people who want to ride by and drive by, and the President so protected by an iron gate, as one of the witnesses just talked about. And this is ironic because this President seems to be one of the most gregarious Presidents that I have seen. He likes being out in crowds. He likes—I am sure he drives the Secret Service mad, crazy, when he is out there, but he likes that. It is an irony. Here is this President who actively out, likes to touch, likes to kiss babies and kiss—shake hands, and et cetera—now would not come to the forefront and say, let's keep this main street open.

And Mr. King is available to answer any specific technical questions, but philosophically and pragmatically this has been damaging to the District of Columbia, and we don't need any more damage done. We have enough damage done already. For many years the Congress has done enough to us, and now it seems as though we have one part of the executive branch doing it to us, too.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Mayor, thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mayor Barry follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARION BARRY, MAYOR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Good morning, Chairman Davis, Congresswoman Norton, other members of the Committee and Staff. It is indeed a pleasure for me to appear before you today to express my opinion and speak for thousands of other District residents and visitors on the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street before 15th and 17th Streets, NW.

The Department of Public Works was notified the afternoon of Friday, May 12, 1995, that Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, N.W. and westbound E Street, N.W. behind the White House would be closed permanently to traffic as of early Saturday morning. As Washington and the world awoke morning, they found the nation's Main Street barricaded to all vehicular traffic.

The weekday traffic impact has been devastating. By closing Pennsylvania Avenue, 26,000 vehicles were forced to use new routes. So were the 12,000 vehicles that once used E Street. Suddenly, 38,000 vehicles were clogging D Street, H Street, I Street, K Street and L Street. These streets already were at or above their own ca-

pacities. For tourists and visitors, residents and commuters, the most scenic by-way in the District suddenly was barricaded.

In an attempt to minimize the impact of the closings, Department of Public Works staff worked that entire weekend installing detour signs and INITIALLY STRIPPING PARKING ON 15TH, 17TH, H AND I STREETS, N.W. After several weeks of observing the flow of vehicles displaced from Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street, DPW, on June 24th and 25th, changed H, I and 15th streets to one-way operations to better facilitate traffic movement. Traffic signals, signage and pavement markings were installed.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration hired the traffic consultant and engineering firm of Barton Ashman to identify the transportation and traffic impacts associated with the closures and recommend corrective actions. Barton Ashman also was charged with evaluating the changes made by DPW.

District staff requested that Barton Ashman conduct an economic impact analysis of the closing on businesses in the downtown area. The draft report was just released by Federal Highway and the Secret Service this morning. District staff will meet with Federal Highway Staff over the next couple of weeks to discuss the findings and possible alternatives.

The Federal Highway Administration authorized the District to spend \$408,000 of our federal-aid transportation appropriation on the changes to the road system. With the subsequent passage by the Congress of the "District of Columbia Emergency Highway Relief Act of 1995", which waived the District's federal-aid transportation match requirements for two years, this \$408,000 was lost to the District for other street and bridge projects.

Rush hour delays have continued to increase despite the establishment of the one-way traffic patterns. Mid-day traffic backs up on several streets surrounding the closed segments. We have heard from many individuals and groups including the D.C. Building Industry Association, the Greater Washington Board of Trade, the D.C. Chamber of Commerce, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, and several downtown business associations about the negative impact of the closing on their activities.

Several landlords have reported that many of their tenants have complained that the closing has made getting to their offices and conducting business extremely difficult. Traffic has made it very arduous for anyone to conduct business along 14th, 15th, 17th, H, and I streets and New York and Pennsylvania avenues near the closed sections.

Commuters who ride Metrobuses and other commuter vehicles have had to deal with chronic delays. Taxi drivers have lost time and therefore, customers and many businesses are questioning the wisdom of staying in a high rent district and having your customers unable to reach your business.

This situation is very difficult for the District. As you know, we are undertaking a major transformation effort of the District government. We are transforming the government into a leaner, more responsive and business friendly entity. A critical element of the transformation is the attraction of new wealth and businesses while reversing the out-migration trend of District residents and businesses. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street is an obstacle to transformation because of their negative impacts.

The District government and the residents of Washington enjoy being the global seat of power. The safety of the President and the First Family is a chief concern and of great importance. We relish our role in protecting the President and his family. Our hearts are still heavy for the souls and families of those lost in the unfortunate bombing of the Alfred E. Mural Federal Office Building in Oklahoma City, which prompted the Secret Service's actions to close our streets.

We must protect those who work in or around federal office buildings from the lunatics who would use a cause to kill and maim innocent men, women and children. However, we must guard against taking away those freedoms and denying access to our institutions that symbolize all that make this country the greatest in the world.

We believe the White House can be protected without closing down Pennsylvania Avenue, the nation's Main Street. We recognize that Title VIII, Sec. 803 of the Terrorism Prevention Act gives the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury extreme latitude in protecting federal buildings in the District of Columbia. Among other things, Sec. 803 provides that, "the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury may prohibit any vehicles from parking or standing on any street or roadway adjacent to any building in the District of Columbia used by law enforcement authorities subject to their jurisdiction that is in whole or in part owned, possessed, or leased to the Federal Government".

We believe that this power should be used with great care and wisdom. The impact of closing streets and eliminating parking on the financial viability of an area and a entire city are immeasurable. The District has been gravely injured by these closings. Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street should be reopened and the National Park Service and the Treasury Department should study other options to ensure the safety of the First Family and the White House.

Thank you.

[The information referred to follows:]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE

Draft Report

Analysis of Transportation Conditions After Traffic Restriction and Street Modifications in the Vicinity of the White House

June, 1996



US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Executive Summary

On May 20, 1995, the United States Department of the Treasury restricted vehicular traffic access to Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th Street and 17th Streets, N.W., adjacent to the White House. This action was taken to enhance security of the White House and for the protection of the President of The United States of America. As part of this action, traffic was also restricted on other streets in the vicinity of the White House, including State Place, Jackson Place, Madison Place and portions of westbound E Street N.W. and Executive Avenue. All streets on which traffic was restricted remained accessible via United States Secret Service security stations. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic on all streets was unaffected.

On June 24 and 25, 1995, the District of Columbia Department of Public Works (DCDPW), Bureau of Traffic Services, further modified street operations in the vicinity in an attempt to compensate for the loss of east-west street capacity through this area. H and I Streets, N.W. between New York and Pennsylvania Avenues were converted to a pair of one-way streets, 15th Street, N.W. between New York Avenue/Pennsylvania Avenue and K Street was converted to a one-way northbound street, and Connecticut Avenue between H and I Streets was converted to a one-way southbound street during morning peak hours only. Other minor changes were made to the street system later.

Study Purpose

This study had three major objectives concerning the traffic restriction and street modifications: the measurement of the usage of the transportation system, the identification of immediate-action transportation improvements, and the identification of other transportation improvements to address problems that cannot be solved through immediate-action improvements.

Study Constraints

The analysis in the study was constrained by several factors. One is the lack of complete data describing the conditions before the traffic restriction and the street modifications. For security reasons, the traffic restriction was instituted without advance notice, so there was no opportunity for the systematic collection of data before the changes. Because of the lack of complete data, the degree to which the traffic restriction and street modifications caused the existing transportation-related conditions cannot be quantitatively determined.

A related constraint is the inability to separate some of the effects of the traffic restriction instituted by the United States Secret Service from those of the subsequent street modifications by the District of Columbia. Consequently, this analysis does not attempt to separately identify their effects, but rather addresses the combined effects of both actions.

Traffic

Three types of traffic analysis were used in the study. The first was an analysis of changes caused by the traffic restriction and street modifications in overall traffic patterns in the primary study area bounded by M Street, N.W. on the north; 12th Street, N.W. on the east; Constitution Avenue on the south; and 23rd Street on the west. This was done using data on traffic volumes, where before-and-after traffic counts existed.

Before the traffic restriction and street modifications, the streets that were affected had carried high volumes of traffic. Pennsylvania Avenue had carried 26,000 vehicles per day, and westbound E Street had carried about 12,000, for a total of approximately 38,000 vehicles per day. This was 26.5 percent of the average weekday east-west traffic between K Street and Constitution Avenue. H and I Streets together carried 27,500 vehicles per day, or 19.2 percent of the traffic.

The traffic restriction on Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street caused the shift of traffic from these streets to other east-west streets in the area. After the traffic restriction and street modifications, the largest increase in traffic occurred on Constitution Avenue, which carries an additional 23,000 vehicles per day, approximately 50 percent more than before the traffic restriction. The H and I Streets one-way pair experienced a 34 percent increase and K Street a 31 percent increase. Constitution Avenue and K Street presently carry over two-thirds of the east-west traffic, as compared to under one-half prior to the traffic restriction.

Traffic on the primary north-south streets also shifted because of the traffic restriction and street modifications. These shifts were smaller than the shifts among the east-west streets. Fourteenth Street had the greatest gain in traffic, increasing its share by approximately four percent of north-south traffic through the downtown. Although 15th Street was modified from a two-way to a one-way northbound street, it carries about the same number of vehicles as when it had two-way flow.

The second traffic analysis was a calculation of levels of traffic service for conditions after the traffic restriction and street modifications. This analysis found that there are substantial traffic operations problems, especially on the east-west streets that gained traffic as a result of the removal of two key east-west street links from the downtown street system. Some streets had traffic problems before the traffic restriction, but the traffic that shifted to those streets aggravates those problems.

The third traffic analysis was an assessment of possible broader shifts in traffic to identify the effects of the traffic restriction and street modifications on the transportation system beyond the immediate vicinity of the changes. Traffic increases or decreases across screenlines at the edges of the primary

study area were found to represent at most one percent of the total traffic volume before the traffic restriction. These changes are insignificant. The effects of the traffic restriction were shown to be confined to the downtown core.

Metrobuses

Metrobus service operated on some of the affected streets and had to be changed. The routes that had followed Pennsylvania Avenue past the White House were the most dramatically changed. Routes that had originally used H or I Streets also had to be reconfigured because of the change in street direction.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA) reports that the routes that were affected by the initial traffic restriction carry about 11,000 riders on a typical day, so the changes in Metrobus services had the potential to affect a large number of bus riders. WMATA staff reported that, although there were changes in ridership, the effect of the changes in street operations could not be separated from other factors that would also affect ridership volumes.

The net effect of the route changes is an overall increase in bus-miles operated. WMATA calculated that the increase in annual operating costs that would be charged to the District of Columbia would be approximately \$315,000. Actual costs of bus service changes will depend upon other unrelated decisions to be made about possible bus service reductions in the District of Columbia.

Tour Buses

Companies that operate tour buses in the White House area were contacted to identify the ways in which their operations were affected. All of the operators who provided information said that they had previously used Pennsylvania Avenue north of the White House, and so had to change their operations in the area. Many of the operators noted that their business volumes were lower during the summer of 1995 than they had been the previous summer, but most noted that the tourist industry in Washington had a generally slow summer and that it would be impossible to determine whether the traffic restriction had any effect on business volumes. The greatest tour-bus impacts associated with the traffic restriction and street modifications will occur during the springtime peak tourist season. The study could not measure this impact, as data collection was done in late summer.

Parking and Building Access

The traffic restriction and street modifications reduced the amount of street space available for vehicular access to buildings, both for the commercial vehicles making deliveries to business

establishments and for parked private vehicles, and the street modifications changed the ways in which some of the remaining space is used. One of the largest obstacles to efficient circulation in the downtown, particularly during the midday peak period, is the lack of available curb space for service-vehicle loading and unloading and the lack of enforcement of service vehicles double parking and blocking travel lanes. This condition is prevalent among the east-west streets in the downtown, particularly I, L, and M Streets.

There are 49 fewer on-street parking meters after the traffic restriction and street modifications than before these changes, which was estimated to reduce annual revenue by approximately \$98,000. To offset that reduction, Barton-Aschman identified 19 locations on these streets where new parking meters could be installed. If these parking meters were installed, the average annual revenue gained would reduce the expected annual loss in on-street parking meter revenue to approximately \$60,000.

In the vicinity of the White House, there are twenty-three off-street parking lots or garages that had the potential to be affected by the traffic restriction and street modifications. In telephone interviews with the management of five major parking operators, none was willing to share detailed financial records describing before-and-after conditions, so the gains or losses for off-street parking businesses cannot be quantified.

Information on possible effects of changes in on-street parking and accommodations for deliveries was obtained from businesses on Pennsylvania Avenue between 17th and 18th Streets. The traffic restriction and street modifications did not create physical changes on this block, as it is the block immediately west of the section where traffic was restricted. A third of the business owners/managers stated that there was no noticeable change in the delivery of goods, or in the number of customers and transactions. The owners/managers of just over half of the businesses responded that business had been negatively affected by the changes. Those who cited a decline attributed it to two main reasons, reduced accessibility and limited parking. Deliveries were cited not as an economic factor but as an inconvenience for some businesses.

Tourist and Visitor Access

Observations of tourist and visitor activity indicate that pedestrian access in the area has been unaffected by the traffic restriction and street modifications. Tourist and visitor attitudes were assessed through 450 personal interviews in the vicinity of the White House. Most people said that the traffic restriction did not cause a problem for their access to the area. The majority of the people interviewed characterized their visit as better or unchanged because of the traffic restriction.

The second set of recommendations includes larger actions, such as street widening and tunnel construction. They would provide more-significant improvements to transportation conditions and include higher-cost capital improvements. These actions would require more-extensive analysis and additional time for design and construction, and so were not appropriate for the immediate-action program. Because they have not been studied in detail, their identification is not a recommendation for their implementation but rather a partial list of the types of actions that could be considered.

Finally, the development of a comprehensive transportation plan for downtown Washington is recommended. Making significant improvements in transportation system performance will require looking beyond the effects of the traffic restriction and street modifications to consider all of the characteristics of the downtown area, many of which have changed since the previous plan was developed more than thirty years ago.

There are three other major attractions besides the White House in the area that were expected to be affected by the traffic restriction, the Renwick Gallery, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, and the Decatur House Museum. Numbers of visitors in 1994 and 1995 appear to be fairly consistent between the two years.

Recommendations

Recommendations from the study are of three types. The first set of recommendations is an immediate-action program. It includes operational and low-cost capital improvements that could improve transportation conditions quickly. These recommendations exclude any actions that would involve the construction of higher-cost capital improvements or that would require extensive study or public review. Implementation of this immediate-action program has already begun, as some of these recommended actions were taken by the DCDPW while the study was still underway.

The immediate-action program was designed to respond to all of the issues addressed in the study. It includes recommendations to:

- Allow two-way traffic on E Street between 15th Street and 17th Street, with appropriate modifications to the street
- Convert 15th Street between New York Avenue/Pennsylvania Avenue and K Street to two-way operation except during the morning peak period when it should continue to operate as a one-way northbound street
- Reconfigure traffic islands on H Street at Pennsylvania and New York Avenues
- Create an additional travel lane on 17th Street between E Street and New York Avenue
- Modify left-turn restrictions on Connecticut Avenue at K Street
- Remove right-turn signal phase on 15th Street at I Street
- Improve signs and pavement markings on 15th at K Street and on 19th at Pennsylvania Avenue
- Move signs on New York Avenue at 11th Street and on H and I Streets
- Change parking restrictions on Connecticut Avenue and 14th, 17th, and 20th Streets
- Move the commuter-bus stop on K Street at Farragut Square
- Retime traffic signals at specific locations and more widely after the above changes
- Designate tour-bus and taxi drop-off areas
- Improve tourist/visitor signs
- Better enforce no-parking/standing/stopping zones

Mr. DAVIS. Larry, do you want to add anything at this point or just be ready for questions?

Mr. KING. I am just ready for questions, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. Let me just state, the Barton Ashman report. I don't know, Larry, how much input the city had in that report? And whether you withheld further actions in traffic adjustments while waiting for that study? When did you get the study? Do you feel it's an adequate review of the economic impact?

Mr. KING. We just received the study late yesterday, early this morning. Some of us got it early this morning. Some of us got it late yesterday. We haven't had time to fully study it.

We have determined that we are going to meet on Thursday of next week with Federal Highways, go over the study. This is a draft report. My understanding is the Federal Highways is not endorsing it. They want to sit down with us and see what we think about it.

We would like to identify from that study and from our studies, because we have been looking at this on our own for the last year, and we have some ideas about what we ought to do to help deal with some of the gridlock. We would like to work with Federal Highways to see what two or three things we can do immediately to help that situation while we further study the report and get the final.

As the Mayor has indicated, we had some input in terms of what the boundaries of the study ought to be, and this does not address the entire boundaries. You understand, this is just a draft. So we think their impacts are farther out than this particular study area indicates. But we expect to work with Federal Highways to refine the study, but while we are going through that, we believe that we can come to some agreement on two or three issues or two or three solutions that will help deal with some of the gridlock.

Mr. BARRY. Also, Mr. Chairman, we certainly believe the study should include the economic impact, the negative impact that it's causing on businesses as well as on the District both from the job point of view and income—tax point of view, and the Federal Government certainly should make us whole. We should not have to suffer adversely because of anything they have done. And that should be above the Federal payment, above what's happening now.

Mr. DAVIS. Right. I happen to agree with that. We were just talking, on some of these appropriation bills, of even attaching an amendment transferring some money.

What I would like to get from the city, your best, honest—no exaggeration—estimates of what the financial impact has been on the city. What do you expect it to be on an annual basis; what is the economic impact on the businesses involved; and what is the environmental impact? Because we know there is impact in each of these areas. And if the administration feels that they have to close this, that's fine. I understand that, and we will work with them. But you have to mitigate these other impacts. And we need to know what that is, and the sooner, the better. You can submit that for the record. Don't exaggerate. Let's just get honest numbers as best as we can justify them, and then we can deal with it from that.

But frankly, it looks like we are going to be able to stop the permanent closure—at least the park—the National Park Service, from expending more money. We are going to do that through congressional action. There's widespread bipartisan support up here to at least step back, take a second look at this, look at all the impacts, and I think there is considerable sympathy for what this is doing to the businesses involved and the city and the region. And to the extent that we can have some good, hard data on that, we may be able to take further action.

I know Ms. Norton, Mr. Moran, myself, and Senator Grams—he has got 46 sponsors over in the Senate for what he is trying to do. So I don't want to overpromise what we can deliver, but I think there is a real chance if we can get an amendment on the House floor to one of these appropriation bills, this may catch fire. So we need to have some hard numbers on that.

Mr. BARRY. Mr. Chairman, I hope that the study could be quickly expanded to include that kind of information. Another one is just—

Mr. DAVIS. We aren't going to have the study done in time.

Mr. BARRY. That's what I was going to say. How can we get some quick data? I don't know. I will have to talk to Larry and others about it.

Mr. DAVIS. We will talk with you all, work with the Board, whatever we need to do.

Mr. BARRY. We can certainly get parking meters and other things. But the other thing which you really can't measure; that is, people get the attitude that it's hard to come downtown, and traffic is just a mess. They just won't come. So it's hard to measure how many people wouldn't come or who wouldn't go and park someplace and shop someplace even as far away as Georgetown, because you have got to get across town if you are coming from one part of Washington, say, at 7th and H over to Georgetown, don't go out to the freeway. That may discourage people.

So we will do the best we can to try to get some information, but just the image of our traffic being deadlocked, gridlocked downtown, and the White House blocked off from everybody and from traffic, it's just a terrible kind of thing for America.

Mr. DAVIS. Well, thank you.

I am going to yield now to the Representative from the District, Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mayor Barry, I know that when you talk about what has happened to the traffic around the White House, you know whereof you speak. 17th Street and 15th Street, for example, were streets to be avoided at all costs anyway before anybody thought about closing Pennsylvania Avenue. Moreover, these are streets—these are the real streets for the commuters, because if you are coming from that 14th Street Bridge, if you are coming from Theodore Roosevelt Bridge, if you are coming from Memorial Parkway, I mean, these are the ways you get into the city. So that if you had wanted to plot a way to stop the city up, you couldn't have picked a better street than Pennsylvania Avenue to close off, not to mention the crossover problem that is intruded here.

I would like to know whether or not anyone has come to you to talk about reimbursement for any part of what has happened? I had understood that the FBI had wanted to reimburse, for example. Has anybody in the administration had any discussions with you about reimbursing you at least for parking meters or for any part of the damage that's been done here?

Mr. BARRY. There's some discussion around some other buildings, but not about this specific situation.

Ms. NORTON. Have any reimbursements been made to date?

Mr. KING. Yes; I believe we have gotten \$8,000 from the Department of Justice. We have an agreement with AFT, Alcohol, Firearms and Tobacco, for the taking out of about seven meters on 7th Street, but we haven't received any cash yet.

The impact is much further than just Pennsylvania Avenue. We have government buildings, Federal Government buildings, all over town, either owned or leased, calling and wanting to take parking out. And in some cases, FBI, Department of Justice, AFT, they just took parking.

Now, we have been working with Mr. Lawson of General Services Administration, have been able to rein a lot of that back in and work through him to develop agreements and stuff. But as soon as Pennsylvania Avenue was closed, every day someone wanted to take parking from in front of their building.

Mr. BARRY. Ms. Norton, it is more than just, as I said earlier, parking. At one point we found people just putting barricades up, even with the FBI Building. We woke up one morning, and they had barricades up. That has to stop. These are our streets, these are our citizens, and these are our tourists. These are our visitors.

And again, if you just took parking as a measurement of the damage, it would be too narrow; not that you are suggesting that. But again, if people can't park, they don't come downtown. They don't shop. They don't do other kinds of things. That then begins to hurt our city even worse.

Ms. NORTON. In fact, your testimony going to multiple impacts really speaks to my prior questions to Mr. Johnson. Who is in charge? I mean, you should not have to nickel-and-dime it through agencies in order to find out if somebody is going to pay the District what they owe the District. And my major concern about this is the uncoordinated, haphazard way in which they dealt with a city which they knew was in trouble.

For example, it was very good initially to put the police, for example, at 15th and H and at some other places in order to hasten traffic. If I may say so, I give the Congress credit for putting police at rush hour at the entryways into the Capitol complex on Independence Avenue and C Street and D Street. There are some cops down there not paid for by the District of Columbia, but by the Congress of the United States, and if they weren't, the traffic consequences on the District of Columbia would be horrendous.

I don't know why that is not a model for what to do here. I saw cops out at 15th and H before. How long were those police kept there and when were they drawn back?

Mayor BARRY. A couple of months.

Also, Ms. Norton, again you and I have worked awfully hard to create and improve the quality of life in the District as well as the

image of the District. The image of the District is too negative in some of the areas, and this adds to the negative image: You can't get across the District, you can't park anywhere, parking is a problem anywhere. And as I said earlier, 15th Street, 17th Street were already clogged up.

And so I had asked, and I am going to call over today, that this had to be put on the agenda for the D.C. Task Force. Alice Rivlin chairs that Task Force and Carol Thompson Cole is the staff person, and hopefully, we can put that on the agenda to get some coordination in other areas so that we don't get each agency calling us and trying to take our streets and our space and take our parking meters, and we have to go back and take them back.

Ms. NORTON. You mentioned the D.C. Task Force, and I think we have certainly seen it be energized by Carol Thompson Cole since she came there.

I wonder if you would believe that a working group, a formal working group involving District and Federal officials just on these Pennsylvania and other security impacts, might be useful in cleaning up this—

Mayor BARRY. I would advocate that. We really need to have a special working group to do that. And in fact it is not too late it seems to me to back up a little bit, at least technically not too late to back up and relook at the whole notion of closing Pennsylvania Avenue, bring Members of the Congress and the city and others in, experts to see. This was self-driven; the goal was already set. Let's close it. Now, let's rationalize why to close it, as opposed to other alternatives to close it. That's how I see it. It's like some reporters have already written the head of the story and they want the other story to justify the head.

Ms. NORTON. Just like they called you and me and said they were going to close it down, and then Mr. Johnson says we were consulted.

Mayor BARRY. I wasn't consulted. They didn't consult. They dialogued.

Mr. DAVIS. They told me the same thing they told you. They told me it was going to happen. They call that a "consultation."

Ms. NORTON. And again, the chairman and I have really been very responsible in the way we have approached this. It's the Park Service that got everybody's dander up. Once they said, here, we go, we closed it and we are going to close it in a way that you will never get it open. And they really got everybody's attention. The Senate hadn't been in this.

This was a real blunder and, Mayor Barry, when you said that the President has to be involved. The fact is that this has been as badly handled as any matter involving the District since President Clinton became President. And it has been badly handled because the President really does over-rely, almost by necessity, on a set of aides for what he ought to do. And when they come up to you and say, They just blew up Oklahoma City, and then they have the demeanor that Mr. Bowron had who comes and says, Let me just tell you the target is not if, it's when you do. As you say, Mr. Mayor, they hadn't been able to do with prior Presidents because you do have the context of the Oklahoma bombing.

So I want you to know that I think you are right when you say that, in effect, the President has to watch out, lest he be captured by the Secret Service; and that would be ironic in the extreme, because I feel that I can say without fear of contradiction that there has never been a President in the history of the United States who has taken as many personal risks in the way he deals with crowds and insists on dealing with people in ways that expose him to danger. So the irony of then putting him behind these barricades is not lost to any of us.

For that reason, when the President was here yesterday to speak to the Democratic caucus, I went up to him afterwards, and while people were telling him how much they loved him and how great he was doing in the polls, I decided to take care of some business, and there were two pieces of business.

Mr. DAVIS. I missed the meeting.

Ms. NORTON. There were two pieces of business that I took care of as I shook his hand. One had to do with my tax bill. And I simply said to him that I wanted to talk personally about it and that there were members of the Cabinet who agreed that we were really at the last resort, that the taxpayers were fleeing too rapidly for us to be able to do much to bring the city back to solvency within the time period, and I wanted to make sure that he had that information.

And then I said to him on Pennsylvania Avenue, "Watch out." And I told him that Chairman Davis and I were not among those saying, Open it yesterday, but that the actions, particularly of the Park Service and others moving the project forward had created great consternation in the city and in the Congress and that he was going to be hoisted on that petard; and I must say to you, the President was most alert and listened very hard and said he thought—he said, I know I will have to deal with both of those issues; and I said I would follow through and follow up. So I do believe that at least for that short period of time we have put it on his radar screen in a way that I think it has not been put before.

I regret that the Oklahoma bombing has resulted in a President with this kind of philosophy of openness being put in this position. And I think, as you say, your obligation and mine to alert him to the danger and the problem when he has had to rely on those who believe that their job is to protect him at all costs, even costs that I think he would not want to be borne by the city or even himself. Thank you.

Mayor BARRY. Ms. Norton, I think we all understand what happened after the Oklahoma City bombing and that the temporary closing was something that was necessary for a lot of different reasons. And my only complaint about that is that they didn't alert my workers in time, but that is OK.

Now that that has sort of settled down, we have now had a chance to look at it a little bit differently, and it seems to me the President has to—we all, you and I, have aides who advise us, but finally it is our ultimate decision. People elected us to make the decisions that affect the lives of our people and our own very lives. And I've often had to make some decisions about my own security that I was not going to be too tight on me about this and about that, and I understand that.

But now is the time for the President—I'm glad you had a chance to raise with him those two things. Now is the time for the President to get involved in this and step in front of the line and say he either agrees or disagrees with the Secret Service. That is where the decision has to lie in his lap, I think.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you both very much.

Before I call our next panel, I wondered if there might be a 5-minute recess. I know there may be some media response. Five minutes, and then we will have Mr. Slater, the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration; Mr. William Lawson, Assistant Regional Administrator for the General Services Administration; and Mr. Dennis Galvin, Associate Director for Professional Services, National Park Service. So we will take a 5-minute recess.

[Recess.]

Mr. DAVIS. I am pleased to introduce and welcome our fifth panel of distinguished witnesses, Mr. Rodney Slater, the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration; Mr. William Lawson, Assistant Regional Administrator of the General Services Administration; and Mr. Dennis Galvin, Associate Director for Professional Services, National Park Service. This is the first time this subcommittee has been honored by your testimony. I thank you for your efforts to help the city resolve many of its outstanding problems.

Mr. Slater, you contracted with a private consulting firm shortly after last year's actions on the impact of those actions. The subcommittee staff received two copies of the study at 6 o'clock last night; it is difficult to absorb it and difficult to comment.

In my July 19th letter to Secretary Rubin, I note that Leon Panetta has asked you to conduct an environmental and economic impact study. We found very little of an environmental or economic nature in the Barton-Aschman study. District officials were barely asked what should be included in that study. They held off undertaking research or further traffic measures, waiting for the study, and they didn't see or hear anything from you on this important matter until yesterday.

So I am sorry, we didn't get this until just yesterday, even though the work was completed before. As you know, the study was finally delivered late yesterday in response to this hearing and to the letter that Delegate Norton and I sent to Secretary Peña on May 29. We also were disappointed OMB declined our invitation to testify today, but I did have a discussion with the Director who, by the way, I hold in very, very high esteem and understand their position.

I think that the Federal Government needs a comprehensive policy toward the District that will hold harmless the District for purely Federal actions, which these closings clearly were. At this point, a full year after the closings, there seems to be no coherent policy established by the administration on this question. Congress can hardly be expected to work alone to help the District, as we have so far been left to do—with very mixed results, I might add. I expected more—I think we expect more from the administration, and I think we are going to continue to seek more, and I think we will be more successful in the future. In the meantime, I want to deal with the officials that are before us today within their areas

of activity and not hold them responsible for actions that you cannot control.

As you have been advised, it is the policy of this committee that all witnesses be sworn before they testify, and if you would now rise with me and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

STATEMENTS OF RODNEY SLATER, ADMINISTRATOR, FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION; WILLIAM LAWSON, ASSISTANT REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR, GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION; AND DENNIS GALVIN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Mr. DAVIS. Let me start with Mr. Slater, and then Mr. Lawson and then we will end with you, Mr. Galvin.

Mr. SLATER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Congresswoman Norton, it is my pleasure to sit before you today, representing the Department of Transportation, to discuss the work that we have done in evaluating the impact on the District of Columbia of the traffic restrictions imposed on Pennsylvania Avenue in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing. And I might add that we appreciate the sensitivity that has been expressed regarding that event, because we, too, know of that loss and in that 11 of our employees were among the 168 Federal employees who perished in that tragedy.

Let me say at the outset that we did have responsibility for overseeing a study dealing primarily with the transportation impact as it relates to the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue. We did take into account some general economic impacts, and I'll get into that during the course of my remarks. But clearly with this draft report and based on some of the discussion that we've heard here this morning, there is the opportunity to do more as relates to examining the economic impacts and the environmental impacts.

Also, through our work in dealing with the environmental assessment, we will get into some of those issues. But I just wanted to say that up front, and then now I'd like to go through the remainder of my remarks as written before me.

Clearly consistent with the Clinton administration's pledge to be a good neighbor to the District and the commitment of the Federal Highway Administration to be a good partner with the District over the last 3½ years, I think we have been able to perform very ably with the District in moving forth significant construction and reconstruction projects on major traffic routes and transportation facilities throughout the District.

We have provided all kinds of technical assistance as relates to the passage of important legislation that was authored by Congresswoman Norton, called the District of Columbia Emergency Highway Relief Act of 1995, which granted a waiver for local matching funds that really have taken us a long way in responding to some of the transportation needs of the region.

I cite these to underscore the fact that we, as an agency, are concerned about the overall transportation implications of the region beyond those relating to just the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue, and because of that understanding and sensitivity, I think we can

serve as a good partner in working with the District to deal with this particular situation.

Also, we have provided assistance to the DPW at the request of Larry Keane, the director, where we have done an extensive analysis of the capability of DPW as relates to moving forward the Federal aid program. All of that will become all the more important as we deal with the current situation at hand.

And then, just yesterday, I had the pleasure of joining Congresswoman Norton and others in the signing of a memorandum of agreement to streamline the contracting process as we move forth with major initiatives.

It is really in this spirit that we approached the issue of the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue and the traffic problems that would result therefrom. Less than a week after the Treasury Department's action to restrict traffic, FHWA authorized the use of \$165,000 in Federal aid funds by DPW to modify District streets as a mean of improving traffic flow. These Federal funds cover 100 percent of the cost of programming traffic signals and installing traffic signal hardware, signs, and pavement markings to convert H and I Streets into a one-way couple and also to convert 15th Street into a one-way street between E and K Streets.

Consistent with the direction of this subcommittee and at the request of the D.C. Council, the FHWA did contract with a private consulting firm called Barton-Aschman Associates to undertake a comprehensive traffic and economic study of the affected area in order to further facilitate the smooth transition to new traffic patterns. An executive summary of that draft report is attached to my testimony.

We also did yesterday provide the subcommittee with a copy of the full report, and, Mr. Chairman, I did note in your testimony that because you just received the report and had not had an opportunity to analyze it in great detail, that another hearing may be necessary to do that and to have testimony on that particular matter, and I would submit our willingness to be a part of a hearing or a private session to do just that.

Barton-Aschman collected and analyzed data concerning traffic conditions that existed prior to and subsequent to the imposition of these traffic restrictions and street modifications. The FHWA managed the contract and monitored the consultant's progress during the data collection and analysis period.

We have recently started consultations with the District as relates to its recommendations in the report so as to prioritize and deal with those that are most appropriate to address the traffic concerns that have been identified. We have also volunteered technical assistance to the Department of the Treasury in preparing an environmental assessment to evaluate whether any significant adverse effects on the environment resulted from the traffic restrictions and street modifications, and I know that that issue has received a lot of attention in prior testimony.

Ordinarily, the restriction of vehicular traffic on a street does not warrant the development of an environmental assessment, but because of the unusual circumstances which led to this action and the controversy surrounding it, the Council on Environmental Quality requested that an environmental assessment be prepared, and we

are moving forth in that regard. The FHWA will use this information and the analysis for the environmental assessment that will be done, meaning the report and the value of that report.

Now, speaking specifically to the substance of the report, let me just say again that it is in draft form. We do plan to consult with the subcommittee and with DCDPW as we go forward. But the consultants hired by FHWA to conduct this study assessed the effects of not only the traffic restrictions on Pennsylvania Avenue and westbound E Street, but also the effects of DCDPW street modifications carried out in response to these restrictions, specifically the conversion of H and I Streets to a one-way couple and the conversion of 15th Street to one-way northbound route.

In conducting this study, the consultant examined the impacts of these traffic restrictions on traffic congestion, traffic patterns, pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, and circuitousness of the circulation. The consultant also assessed the changes made in the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's Metrobus operations as a result of the restriction.

The impacts on local businesses due to loss of curb parking and loading zones, the loss of direct vehicular access and the increased circuitousness of access were also studied. In addition, the consultant evaluated the effects of this traffic restriction on the routing and parking of tour buses and access of tourists to major attractions in the vicinity of the White House.

Traffic: The draft report includes general conclusions about traffic shifts, but more specific effects of traffic restrictions could not be isolated due to a lack of comprehensive data on preexisting traffic levels. The best information we had was 1993 data.

While recognizing that serious congestion existed prior to the action, clearly the study shows, nevertheless, that a substantial increase in traffic on many streets around the White House has resulted from the restriction on Pennsylvania Avenue. Most specifically, the study indicated that traffic shifts have been limited to the immediate vicinity of the White House, and I underscore that because some of the discussion has gotten into that issue.

The study found that most of the impact had occurred within the immediate vicinity around the White House—Constitution Avenue, I and H Streets, K Street, and in that general area.

As relates to Metrobuses, it was recognized that an impact on the routing and patronage of Metrobuses had been realized. The draft report includes WMATA's assessment of the operational changes, and as has been noted, these changes will cost them about \$310,000 annually as they have noted thus far. All of this is necessary for additional running times for bus routes, physical changes made to the routes and the distribution of buses to accommodate the traffic restrictions.

As relates to tourists and tour buses, the great majority of tourists had either a neutral or a positive reaction to the restriction of vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue. Over 90 percent reported that it would not affect their decision to return to the area, and note here I'm talking only about tourists and not necessarily D.C. residents who would use it for traffic purposes, moving from work to home, et cetera.

Tour bus operators reported no loss in income has resulted from these traffic restrictions; however, these operators have had to park their tour buses on more commercial streets in the vicinity of the White House, which has undoubtedly affected local traffic congestion and access to local businesses, and what we would offer there is that we work with the D.C. government and with the tour bus operators to find some way of addressing this situation.

Businesses and parking: The effect on local businesses really has been extremely difficult to quantify for a couple of reasons. Riggs Bank is really the only business entity located on Pennsylvania Avenue itself in the area of the restrictions, and three parking spaces in front of the bank have been maintained and there are also other alternative means for accessing the bank. I do know that we have a Riggs Bank representative who will testify here today, and we too look forward to hearing that testimony.

Also as relates to businesses on the surrounding streets, again our area of focus was rather limited. We did not go throughout the District proper, but right in and around the area of Pennsylvania Avenue. Many of these merchants reported that their businesses had been adversely affected, but it was difficult to distinguish the effect of these impacts and to determine whether they were related to the traffic restrictions or to other factors such as the unusually harsh winter or the two Federal Government shutdowns, and then just overall economic trends.

The study did show that these restrictions resulted in the loss of 49 metered parking spaces in the vicinity of the White House, but as a result of the study, we were able to identify approximately 19 locations within the area where parking meters could be installed in a way to minimize those costs.

Now, to the recommendations—and I am moving to a close—the draft report includes a series of recommendations proposed by the consultants, regarding ways to improve the traffic operations within the study area. The recommendations fall into three categories basically: immediate action items, long-term transportation improvement measures, and the development of a comprehensive transportation needs assessment for the District.

And that point has really been made over and over, the fact that our study does not provide a lot of detailed information. This kind of comprehensive transportation needs assessment for the District would, in fact, provide that information. The last time one was done was approximately 30 years ago.

The immediate actions or items noted involved restriping intersections so as to allow for the passage of more traffic; using a traffic signal optimization model to maximize the efficiency of the existing intersection system; reconfiguring the raised island for more efficient operations and restoring traffic along the westbound section of E Street. Possible long-term actions include the conversion of 14th and 15th Streets to a one-way couple, and the construction of a tunnel to restore westbound traffic under E Street.

The comprehensive analysis of the overall traffic needs of the District downtown core could be carried out in the near future to identify actions that would deal with questions regarding congestion in the city.

Our conclusions: Traffic has been impacted. There are negative results that have occurred as a result of the closure, but there are ways to deal with many of those results. We, as an agency, are committed to working in a consultative process with the District to begin to determine any mitigation measures and to weigh those recommended in the report. We also will stand ready to assist the District in evaluating possible funding mechanisms to determine which of these funding sources would be most appropriate for each of the mitigating measures being considered.

I personally pledge the support of our FHWA staff to advance project implementations aimed at enhancing traffic flow around the White House once appropriate mitigation measures are determined and funding sources and amounts are agreed upon.

We stand ready to initiate, after consultation with the District government and with this committee, if necessary, a comprehensive study of the overall traffic needs of the city. Again, note that this last was done some 30 years ago.

We will continue to assist the District in implementing overarching reforms of DPW's program delivery process, and our efforts in this regard will be tied to the results of the study, as we look to the long-term needs that have been identified in the memorandum of agreement that was signed yesterday.

And also, with this economic revival going on in the District, we clearly understand how transportation relates to that. And we look forward to the opportunity to work with the District, with this committee, and with others to ensure that the transportation needs of the citizens of the District, the visitors to the District, to ensure that those are adequately met.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony, and I will respond to questions as the time is appropriate.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Slater follows:]

STATEMENT OF RODNEY E. SLATER
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BEFORE THE
HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT

HEARING ON THE FEDERAL RESPONSE TO
THE IMPACTS ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OF
THE CLOSING OF A PORTION OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

JUNE 7, 1996

On behalf of the Department of Transportation, I am pleased to participate in this hearing to evaluate the impact on the District of Columbia (D.C.) of the traffic restrictions imposed on Pennsylvania Avenue in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing. As an agency, we know all too well the loss that can be experienced as a result of a terrorist attack. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) lost eleven of the 168 Federal employees that perished on that tragic day.

The FHWA's Relationship with the District of Columbia

Consistent with the Clinton Administration's pledge to be a good neighbor to D.C. and consistent with the FHWA's commitment to be a partner with the District, I am pleased that over the last three and a half years we have been able to work very closely with the city to advance significant construction and reconstruction projects on major traffic routes. This hearing is timely especially in view of our intensified efforts over the past year to reinforce the District's infrastructure

- * We provided the D.C. government with technical assistance and support which were crucial to Congressional passage of legislation introduced by Congresswoman Norton. The District of Columbia Emergency Highway Relief Act of 1995 granted D.C. a waiver from the local matching share normally required of the recipients of Federal-aid highway funds.
- * In order to help the city cope with current D.C. Department of Public Works (DCDPW) funding and staffing problems, we have worked proactively with the D.C. government and have provided program delivery assistance aimed at resolving these difficulties.
- * We have performed a study of the longer term needs of the DCDPW in the areas of staffing and administrative procedures in an effort to enhance the project delivery process in the District.
- * Just yesterday, I witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement by the D.C. government, the D.C. Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority (the Control Board), and the FHWA that is designed to streamline the Federal-aid highway contracts award process in D.C. This agreement eliminates many of the reviews and approvals previously required, and consequently it will greatly decrease the time needed to process Federal-aid highway contract awards. Delayed delivery of contract awards impacts both the cost and timely completion of needed highway projects.
- * As a part of my personal review of the National Highway System, I made an extensive road trip throughout D.C. on Thursday May 25th, 1995. Along with a group of District of Columbia representatives, I toured active and proposed Federal-aid highway projects. The agenda included stops at the Sousa Bridge construction project, the New York

Avenue development corridor, the Barney Circle Freeway Modification Project, and the National Mall Monument program. We discussed many issues during this tour including the FHWA's efforts to help the D.C. government with their fiscal crisis, the status of the District's bridge replacement program, and the importance of a viable transportation system (including a complete Interstate System) to the District's economic future.

In light of these past endeavors by the FHWA to assist the District in resolving traffic-related problems and our plans to aid the city in the coming year, the transportation situation in the District of Columbia is a lot brighter than it would otherwise have been.

It was in the same spirit of cooperation with the District that the FHWA offered to help the city solve traffic problems resulting from vehicular access restrictions around the White House. Less than a week after the Treasury Department's action to restrict traffic, the FHWA authorized the use of \$165,000 in Federal-aid funds by the DCDPW to modify District streets as a means of improving traffic flow. These Federal funds covered 100% of the cost of programming traffic signals and installing traffic signal hardware, signs, and pavement markings to convert H and I Streets into a one-way couple, and to convert 15th Street into a one-way street between E and K Streets.

Consistent with the direction of this Subcommittee and at the request of the City Council, the FHWA contracted with Barton-Aschman Associates to undertake a comprehensive traffic and economic study of the affected area in order to further facilitate a smooth transition to the new traffic patterns. An executive summary of the draft report is attached to my testimony, and we have provided the Subcommittee with copies of the full draft report. Barton-Aschman collected and analyzed data concerning the traffic conditions existing prior and subsequent to the imposition

of these traffic restrictions and street modifications. The FHWA managed the contract and monitored the consultant's progress during data collection and analysis. Recently, the FHWA initiated consultations with D.C. transportation officials on the results of the study delineated in a draft report. We will work with the city to determine which of the mitigation measures recommended by the consultant in the draft report should be implemented.

We have also volunteered technical assistance to the Treasury Department in preparing an environmental assessment (EA) to evaluate whether any significant adverse effects on the environment resulted from the traffic restrictions and street modifications. Ordinarily, the restriction of vehicular traffic on a street does not warrant the development of an environmental assessment, but because of the unusual circumstances which led to this action and the controversy surrounding it, the Council on Environmental Quality requested that an EA be prepared. The FHWA will use the data and analysis developed in the course of the traffic and economic study for the assessment of impacts for purposes of the EA.

Draft Report on Transportation Conditions in the Vicinity of the White House

Reasons for Compiling the Report

The purposes of the study underlying the draft report were to gather data to determine the performance of the street system within the study area, to identify transportation improvements which could be implemented immediately to mitigate the impact of the traffic restrictions and street modifications, and to identify other transportation problems that will require more extensive analysis or more long-term solutions.

Scope of the Draft Report

The consultant hired by the FHWA to conduct this study assessed the effects of not only

the traffic restrictions on Pennsylvania Avenue and westbound E Street, but also the effects of the DCDPW street modifications carried out in response to these restrictions (e.g. conversion of H and I Streets to a one-way couple and conversion of 15th Street to a one-way northbound route). The study used three types of traffic analysis: comparison of traffic volumes before and after the restrictions were imposed, travel-time speed-and-delay studies, and assessment of broader shifts in traffic using a regional traffic model.

In conducting this study, the consultant examined the impacts of these traffic restrictions on traffic congestion, traffic patterns, pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, and the circuitousness of circulation. The consultant also assessed the changes made in the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA's) Metrobus operations in the study area. The impacts on local businesses due to the loss of curb parking and loading zones, the loss of direct vehicular access, and the increased circuitousness of access were studied. In addition, the consultant evaluated the effects of this traffic restriction on the routing and parking of tour buses and the access of tourists to major attractions in the vicinity of the White House.

Conclusions in the Draft Report

As to the impact on traffic, the draft report includes some general conclusions about traffic shifts before and after implementation of the traffic restrictions, but the consultant could not isolate the effects of these restrictions more specifically due to a lack of comprehensive data on the pre-existing level of traffic. While recognizing that serious congestion existed prior to the action, the analysis nonetheless revealed a substantial increase in traffic on many of the streets around the White House. It also indicated that on other streets in the study area there had been no change or a decrease in traffic. Most significantly, the study indicated that the traffic shifts had

been limited to the immediate vicinity of the White House (on Constitution Avenue and H, I, and K Streets) and that any effects on the surrounding area were negligible: the use of a regional traffic model illustrated that there were no broader shifts in traffic as a result of the action.

As to the impact on the routing and patronage of Metrbuses, the draft report includes an assessment, provided by WMATA, of the operational changes necessitated by the traffic restrictions around the White House. These changes include additional running times for bus routes, physical changes made to the routes, and redistribution of buses to accommodate the traffic restrictions and street modifications.

The great majority of tourists had a neutral or positive reaction to the restriction of vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue, and over 90 percent reported that it would not affect their decision to return to the area. Tour bus operators reported no loss of income as a result of these traffic restrictions. However, these operators have had to park their tour buses on the more commercial streets in the vicinity of the White House, and this response to the traffic restrictions on Pennsylvania Avenue has undoubtedly had an impact on local traffic congestion and access to local businesses. The FHWA will work with the D.C. government and the tour bus operators to develop a mutually agreeable solution to this situation.

The effects on local businesses were extremely difficult to quantify. Riggs Bank is the only business entity located on Pennsylvania Avenue itself, and the three parking spaces in front of it were maintained in order to lessen the impact of the traffic restrictions. Moreover, reasonable alternative means of accessing this bank via New York Avenue and 15th Street continue to exist. As to businesses on the surrounding streets, although many of these merchants reported that their businesses had been adversely affected, it was impossible to distinguish the effect of these traffic

restrictions and modifications from other factors, such as an unusually harsh winter, two Federal government shutdowns, and overall economic trends. Nonetheless, the study did show that these traffic restrictions resulted in a loss of 49 metered parking spaces in the vicinity of the White House. To offset this loss and lessen the impact on area businesses, however, the study also identified nineteen locations within the area where metered parking could be installed.

Recommendations in the Draft Report

The draft report includes a series of recommendations proposed by the consultant regarding ways to improve traffic operations in the study area. These recommendations fall into three categories: immediate-action items, longer-term transportation improvement measures, and the development of a comprehensive transportation needs assessment for the District. Immediate action items include restriping intersections to allow passage of more traffic, using a traffic signal optimization model to maximize the efficiency of the existing intersection system, reconfiguring raised islands for more efficient operations, and restoring traffic along westbound E Street. Possible longer-term actions include the conversion of 14th and 15th Streets to a one-way couple and construction of a tunnel to restore westbound traffic to E Street. The comprehensive analysis of the overall traffic needs of the District's downtown core could be carried out in the near future to identify further actions to ease congestion in the city.

Conclusion

In closing, I would like to reiterate the FHWA's continued commitment to assist the District in any way we can to improve traffic operations in the city.

- * In the coming months, we will supply all the technical assistance needed to complete an environmental assessment of the traffic restrictions and street modifications in the vicinity

of the White House.

- * We will continue the consultation process begun with the District to determine which of the mitigation measures recommended in the draft report should be implemented.
- * We will assist the District in evaluating possible funding mechanisms and determining which of these funding sources would be most appropriate for each of the mitigation measures being considered.
- * I also pledge the support of the FHWA staff to advance project implementation aimed at enhancing traffic flow around the White House once appropriate mitigation measures are determined and funding sources and amounts are agreed upon.
- * We stand ready to initiate, after consultation with the D.C. government, a comprehensive study of the overall traffic needs of the city.
- * We will continue to assist the District in implementing overarching reforms of the DCDPW's program delivery processes. Our efforts in this regard will be tied to the results of the study we conducted of the longer-term needs of the DCDPW and the Memorandum of Agreement signed yesterday through which we established a pilot program providing for the expeditious award of Federal-aid highway contracts while assuring quality and cost competitive highway contracting within the District.
- * I would also just like to note the recent reports that D.C. is in the midst of an economic revival. We, at FHWA, naturally understand how crucial efficient transportation systems are to the economic vitality of an area. Thus, we have been and will continue to work with the D.C. government, this Subcommittee, other Federal agencies, and the private sector to enhance the major gateway corridors to the city.

Thank you for the opportunity to report on our efforts. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Mr. DAVIS. Bill.

Mr. LAWSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If I may enter my testimony in the record and read a few excerpts.

I am pleased to be here today to talk about GSA's plan to improve security at buildings in our inventory which lie in the District of Columbia. GSA is the government entity charged with providing office space for most of the Federal buildings and Federal civilian workforce. As part of this mission, GSA's responsibility is to protect Federal property under its charge and control by providing a safe and secure environment for the conduct of government operations.

The day after the Oklahoma bombing, the President directed the Department of Justice to assess the vulnerability of all Federal buildings in the United States, particularly to acts of terrorism and other forms of violence. The Vulnerability Assessment Study was coordinated by the U.S. Marshals Service and accomplished by an interagency working group comprised of security professionals from the Department of Justice, GSA, the Marshals Service, FBI, Department of Defense, Social Security Administration, State Department, and the U.S. Secret Service. The findings and recommendations of this working group were included in the June 28, 1995, report entitled: "Vulnerability Assessment of Federal Facilities."

The major recommendation of the DOJ report was that, where feasible, each Federal facility should be enhanced with a minimum set of security standards based on its specific security needs and requirements. Using DOJ criteria of tenant population, volume of public contact, size, and agency mission sensitivity, the facilities were categorized according to five security levels.

GSA has taken the lead role in working with our client agencies around the country and in the national capital area to help classify their facilities. GSA's goal is to identify the security enhancements and upgrades essential to incorporating security measures commensurate with the level of facility's classification.

As a result of recommendations from the Buildings Security Committees in the National Capital Region, GSA has concluded that, in order to improve security, we will need to control adjacent parking at 19 Level IV buildings in our inventory which lie within the District of Columbia. Our recommendation to control parking at these buildings was based on a directive contained in the DOJ report which states:

Where feasible, parking areas adjacent to Federal space should also be controlled to reduce the potential for threats against Federal facilities and employee exposure to criminal activity.

A Level IV building is categorized as one which houses 450 or more Federal employees; has a high volume of public contact; contains more than 150,000 square feet; and, houses tenant agencies that may include high-risk law enforcement and intelligence agencies, courts, judicial offices, and highly sensitive government records.

A typical Level IV building is the Department of Justice on Constitution Avenue. The Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City would also have fallen into this category. The necessity to control parking at 19 Level IV buildings will impact the avail-

ability of parking to the public of approximately 360 metered parking spaces in the District.

It is GSA's goal to work cooperatively with the State and local governments prior to undertaking any actions which may impact an area of our community. Therefore, we are working with and will continue to work with the District government to learn the best way to implement our plan.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to address you this morning. I will be happy to respond to any questions that the committee may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lawson follows:]

Good morning, Mr. Chairman. My name is William R. Lawson and I am the Assistant Regional Administrator for the Public Buildings Service of the National Capital Region at the General Services Administration (GSA). I am here today to talk to you about GSA's plans to improve security at buildings in our inventory which lie within the District of Columbia.

GSA is the government entity charged with providing office space for most of the federal civilian workforce. As part of this mission, GSA's responsibility is to protect Federal property under its charge and control by providing a safe and secure environment for the conduct of government operations.

The Federal Protective Service (FPS), a division of GSA's Public Buildings Service, is responsible for accomplishing GSA's physical security and law enforcement mission. FPS' mission is to protect the federal workplace. This includes preventing the disruption of operations, and ensuring the safety and security of over one million government employees and thousands of daily visitors in over 8,100 buildings nationwide.

Since 1971, the FPS has enforced rules and regulations governing public buildings, maintained law and order, and protected life and property in GSA controlled and delegated buildings. The protection of our employees and visitors in the government's facilities is our number one concern. From uniformed officers to communication and alarm systems, from security reviews and consultation to ongoing investigative support, we all benefit from a vigilant FPS.

The day after the bombing in Oklahoma City, the President directed the Department of Justice (DOJ) to assess the vulnerability of all federal buildings in the United States, particularly to acts of terrorism and other forms of violence. The vulnerability assessment study was coordinated by the U.S. Marshals Service and accomplished by an interagency working group comprised of security professionals from the DOJ, GSA, the Marshals Service, FBI, Department of Defense, Social Security Administration, State Department and the U.S. Secret Service. The findings and recommendations of this working group were included in the June 28, 1995 report entitled *Vulnerability Assessment of Federal Facilities*.

The major recommendation of the DOJ report was that, where feasible, each federal facility should be enhanced with a minimum set of security

standards based on its specific security needs and requirements. Using DOJ criteria of tenant population, volume of public contact, size, and agency mission sensitivity, the facilities were categorized according to five security levels. The report further recommended that security upgrades first be addressed through the establishment of formal building security committees. These committees, of which over 6,500 were established, were composed of tenant and GSA security representatives charged with reviewing and assessing existing security measures and making recommendations to meet the minimum standards outlined in the DOJ report. GSA had the responsibility for reviewing these recommendations. Overall, the building security committee review process resulted in over 10,000 recommendations for security countermeasure upgrades. Of these recommendations, over 8,000 were approved.

To address security governmentwide in GSA as well as non-GSA space, the President signed Executive Order 12977, dated October 19, 1995, creating the Interagency Security Committee (ISC). Chaired by the Administrator of GSA, the ISC is a permanent body that includes Department representatives, agencies in non-GSA space (for example, the Department of Defense and Veteran's Affairs), and members of the President's Management Council. The ISC established a number of key working groups to address specific security issues such as:

- establishing governmentwide policies for building security, including those recommended in the DOJ report;
- implementing appropriate security measures in federal buildings;
- Encouraging agencies with security responsibilities to share security-related intelligence in a timely and cooperative manner;
- Assessing expansion of technology and information systems as a means of providing cost-effective and efficient enhancements to building security;
- Developing a centralized government security data base; and
- Ensuring security standards for child care centers in federal facilities

I mentioned a moment ago that the DOJ Report established criteria to divide federal holdings into five security levels to determine which minimum standards are appropriate for each security level. GSA has taken the lead role in working with our client agencies around the country and in the National Capital area to help classify their facilities. GSA's goal is to identify the security enhancements and upgrades essential to

incorporating security measures commensurate with the level of a facility's classification.

As a result of recommendations from Building Security Committees in the National Capital Region, GSA has concluded that, in order to improve security, we will need to control adjacent parking at 19 Level IV buildings in our inventory which lie within the District of Columbia. Our recommendation to control parking at these buildings was based on a directive contained in the DOJ Report that states "where feasible, parking areas adjacent to federal space should also be controlled to reduce the potential for threats against Federal facilities and employee exposure to criminal activity."

A Level IV building is categorized as one which houses 450 or more Federal employees; has a high volume of public contact; contains more than 150,000 square feet; and houses tenant agencies that may include high-risk law enforcement and intelligence agencies, courts, judicial offices, and highly sensitive government records. A typical Level IV buildings is the Department of Justice Building on Constitution Avenue. The Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building would also have fallen into this category. The necessity to control parking at these 19 Level IV buildings will impact the availability to the public of approximately 360 metered parking spaces.

It is GSA's goal to work cooperatively with State and local governments prior to undertaking any actions which may impact an area or community. Therefore, we are working and will continue to work with the District Government to learn the best way to implement our plan.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to address you this morning. I will be happy to respond to any questions the Committee may have.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Galvin.

Mr. GALVIN. Mr. Chairman, I have a short statement. I will summarize it and submit the full statement for the record.

Shortly after the restriction of vehicle use on Pennsylvania Avenue, the White House asked the National Park Service to coordinate the redesign of the area north of the White House and specifically to deal with Pennsylvania Avenue. The context of that request from the White House was that the Park Service had for some years been working on a comprehensive design plan for the White House that included consideration of traffic, delivery, and other things related to the everyday life at the White House, its preservation as a historic building, its destination for international tourists.

We were asked by the White House to redesign Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th to 17th Streets, and to meet several criteria. One is that public vehicular traffic would be restricted; second, that there would be vehicular access to the White House, vehicular access to support the visiting dignitaries that stay at Blair House, and the special needs of the neighbors, specifically Renwick Gallery, the people on Lafayette Square, the Riggs Bank, and to accommodate the Inaugural Parade every 4 years.

In addition, the White House asked us to undertake short-term beautification actions and to deal with the appearance of the jersey barriers and the need to park agents and vehicles, to improve that.

The area of design is the setting of the White House, our first Federal property, and also includes a high concentration of historic landmark structures and districts. This area was a critical area of L'Enfant's 1795 plan for Washington.

Pennsylvania Avenue did not cross in front of the White House in that plan, but evolved over time as people moved east to west and west to east in the city, and replaced what was then known as President's Square.

To do this we undertook a public process, beginning public scoping in October and developing a mailing list, putting notices on the Internet in a process we call scoping, to get public ideas about what they thought the space in front of Pennsylvania Avenue should be.

In addition, in December, we invited 12 of the best designers and managers of public space that we could find to something called a design charette or workshop. They spent 3 days analyzing the input from the public, listening to others who had an interest in the space we were designing, and developing a set of design guidelines for the space which were published shortly after the design workshop.

The results of that October 1995 survey are interesting. Now, I should say that the context of this survey was that the Avenue was closed. We did not invite comments on the opening or closing of the Avenue. But rather asked people what they would like to see in the space in front of the White House.

Over 500 people responded. Seventy-seven percent favored a traditional area. More than 91 preferred a noncommercial atmosphere. The others preferred qualities were a peaceful and contemplative area, a public space, a quiet area, an area that encourages stopping, talking and viewing. All of those were in the 75 percent

area. An educational area, 71 percent, an expansive and open area, 72 percent.

The design charette took that information and recognized this as a special opportunity to,

Promote the founders vision for connection between citizens and the presidency by cultivating Pennsylvania Avenue's rich possibilities to serve as part of America's town square at the White House, while enhancing the connection between the President's Park and the broader city.

On May 22, the National Park Service released its preferred alternative, along with four other alternatives for dealing with the public space. Newsletters were mailed to over 4,000 individuals and organizations, and all the documents are available on the Internet.

Public forums were held this week, June 4, 5, and 6, to hear both from local citizens and from those who are visiting from across the country and around the world.

It is our view that our job is to provide a concept that will be a goal for all of us to work toward. It will require private and public partnerships and be a long-term effort by many agencies.

In the case of Pennsylvania Avenue, comfortable, known traffic patterns have been disrupted. The city is not the same, but it can be as strong as the ideals the founders established. How we deal with this sets a precedent for urban areas across the country. We must preserve and protect our most important symbols and we can solve our most vexing urban problems together.

That concludes my summary, Mr. Chairman, I would be glad to answer any questions that you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Galvin follows:]

STATEMENT OF DENIS P. GALVIN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, CONCERNING THE RESTRICTION OF VEHICLE USE ON PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE.

June 7, 1996

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's role in connection with the restriction of vehicle use on Pennsylvania Avenue by the Department of Treasury. As a result of this restriction, the National Park Service was asked to coordinate a redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue. We would like to summarize the activities we have been involved with to date to accomplish this task.

The National Park Service (NPS) mission is to protect our Nation's most precious natural, cultural, and historic resources and to preserve them unimpaired for future generations. In its stewardship role, the NPS was provided a rare opportunity in June 1995 to further perform that duty. We were asked by the White House to redesign Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th to 17th Streets. This redesign followed traffic restrictions instituted by the Treasury Department on May 20, 1995.

The area of redesign is the setting of the White House--our first Federal property--and also includes a high concentration of historic landmarks, structures, and districts. This area was a critical element of L'Enfant's 1791 plan for Washington. Pennsylvania Avenue did not cross in front of the White House in

L'Enfant's plan but rather evolved over time and replaced what was then known as President's Square.

The NPS, recognizing the serious nature of the task presented, sought advice and counsel from some of the best thinkers and designers in this country and from the public. We developed a very inclusive public design process that began in October 1995. We asked the public for ideas through mailings, meetings, open houses, the internet, and specific invitations to design professionals and students. We analyzed the public responses and gathered, organized, and displayed the plans and ideas we received.

Those who responded to the October 1995 survey identified those qualities they would prefer to see incorporated into a final design for Pennsylvania Avenue at the White House. The responses supported the following qualities:

- Nearly 77% favored a traditional area
- More than 91% preferred a noncommercial atmosphere
- The other preferred qualities were a peaceful and contemplative area (76%); a public space (91%); a quiet area (79%); an area that encourages stopping, talking, and viewing (80%); an educational area (71%); and an expansive and open area (72%)
- A formal area (51%) was preferred to an informal area (35%); and a space that would be a separate urban oasis

(52%) was somewhat more preferred than one integrated with the city (38%).

Following the gathering of the public views and ideas for the avenue, preeminent design professionals volunteered their time and attended a December 1995 design workshop or charette, chaired by Mr. Harry G. Robinson III, FAIA, Architect and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Howard University, Washington D.C. The workshop reaffirmed, in its guiding principles, that a special opportunity has been provided at this time...to "promote the founders vision for a connection between citizens and the presidency by cultivating Pennsylvania Avenue's rich possibilities to serve as part of America's town square at the White House", while enhancing "the connection between President's Park and the broader city."

On May 22 the preferred alternative was presented for public review. The preferred alternative and the other alternatives considered are being explained in flyers and newsletters and analyzed in an Environmental Assessment. Newsletters were mailed to over 4,000 individuals and organizations interested in the planning and all the documents are available on the internet. The NPS held public forums on June 4, 5, and 6 here in Washington, D.C., to hear both from local citizens and from those who are visiting from across the country and around the world. The public comment period, which began May 22, will close on June 28, 1996. Changes in the plan will be made based on public review and

in coordination with the project Executive Committee (membership attached). The concept provides a goal to work toward. It is envisioned that accomplishing this goal would require private and public partnerships and be a long-term effort by many agencies.

In the case of Pennsylvania Avenue, comfortable, known traffic patterns have been disrupted. Unattractive temporary concrete barriers have detracted not only from the visitor experience, but from the welcoming, strong, and democratic image appropriate for the setting of the White House. The city is not the same, but it can be as strong as the ideals the founders established. How we deal with this sets a precedent for urban areas across our country.

Our Nation is not the same. We are sadder and wiser--aware that the potential for large-scale destruction exists even within our borders. But, we are also resolute that we must preserve and protect our most important symbols, and we can solve our most vexing urban problems--together.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my remarks. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE DESIGN PROJECT
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Executive Committee
1995-1996

Chair:

Director, National Park Service

Members:

Executive Office of the President

Executive Residence at the White House

Office of the First Lady

White House Military Office

U.S. Department of the Treasury

U.S. Secret Service

General Services Administration

National Park Service

District of Columbia

Department of Public Works

Office of Planning

Commission of Fine Arts

National Capital Planning Commission

Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation*

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

Federal Highway Administration

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan

Representative Ralph Regula

Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton

Representative Thomas M. Davis, III

** Served as a member June 1995, through March 1996.*

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you.

I will start the questioning with Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I recognize that each of you gentlemen have been given your respective responsibilities and have tried to carry them out. Let me just say for the record that all of these agencies have been very helpful to the District, historically and generally. I can't say enough about highways.

And I want to say to Mr. Slater, although I deeply regret that the study was gotten to us too late and may necessitate another hearing, your own good faith is very well-documented. You have, of all the agencies of the Federal Government, it is highways that has been most forthcoming to the District, setting a model that I am not sure we have seen in other agencies.

And I want to thank you, Mr. Slater, for being so far as I can tell, the only agency that has come forward today with some concrete suggestions of what you intend to do in order to be useful to the District. And some of those are, indeed—would indeed be very useful to us in dealing with this crisis. Rather, we have heard apologetas about why what is had to be.

I want to thank GSA for its response, whenever I have had discussions with you about the need for reimbursements for these agencies and to otherwise try to pull them in, I have found GSA very helpful. GSA is being very helpful now on the District Building, the John Wilson Building. We have some real problems at OMB. GSA has moved ahead in a way, again, if I may use highways and GSA for a moment, I mean, highways was really helpful when we almost lost that \$200 million worth of money. It has reached out to help the Department of Public Works become a better place; detailing people, you put your money in it.

Yesterday you demonstrated a pothole filler that you lent to the department. This is how Federal agencies at a time the District is in extreme duress should be performing.

Mr. Lawson at GSA looked and saw that the Federal Triangle Building was going up beside a slum, but that's what the District Building has become, a kind of symbol of the decline involving the District. Instead of the GSA saying this brand-new wonderful palace which we need for trade purposes will just have to live alongside this slum, GSA moves forward. It was GSA moving forward with a developer who had a good idea to say maybe without costing the District any money we can take this slum and make it the proud piece of historic architecture it deserves to be.

We now have more problems at OMB, and I don't understand why I am having to fight my own administration to get good things like what you are trying to do, done, Mr. Lawson.

Poor, poor Mr. Galvin, I do not know why in the world you wanted to come here today.

Mr. GALVIN. I didn't.

Ms. NORTON. You didn't?

Mr. GALVIN. No.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Galvin—

Mr. DAVIS. He is under oath. He had to say that.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I don't know how far down in the pecking order you are, but I have to respect them for their courage in not exposing themselves. I'm not going to shoot—I'm not going to shoot this messenger either.

And by the way, not in your particular section but the Park Service has been, since I have been in Congress, a marvel to work with, frankly. Mr. Stanton has worked very closely with me.

We have some problems now up in Ward 4, the stadium up in Ward 4, but I have always have been able to work well with the Park Service. And I recognize that something inanimate called the White House screamed out from a building one night and said: Go forward and pave over, grass over Pennsylvania Avenue. And the Park Service heard this voice from the White House, unidentified, but it was coming out of the walls and it says: I have my direction, I must go forward and do whatever I have to do on Pennsylvania Avenue.

The reason I hold the Park Service accountable, very frankly, is that we told them from the beginning—told them from the beginning, had meetings with them—and it was up to the Park Service to go back and tell whoever the White House is that this wasn't going to happen. Told them it wasn't going to happen. Said it was an arrogant, terrible thing to do to the District when it was insolvent. Said that we weren't even talking about an immediate opening, but this was permanent closure. And no amount of discussion sent them back to whoever the White House is, to say there may be some problems here.

So I blame the Park Service for the fact that this has become politicized, that you have 45 Republicans over there now signing, that you have the chairman and me having really disposed of your plan.

You wasted money. You wasted time on the architects. There is not a ghost of a chance that is going to happen. That is one of the reasons why they even sent you over, why they went to extraordinary lengths to get someone from the Park Service to testify, because it was known it was now a public matter that the Park Service plan was deader than dead.

So I don't blame you because you are not the responsible party, but I have to say it for the record because there should have been a way that the concerns of the committee, of the Representative from the District, of the city could have been factored into the work that was Park Service was doing.

There were suggestions I made about can't you all now suggest that tourist buses could go through on an occasional basis. I mean, nothing that we suggested happened. And in your own testimony, you make it clear, you know, what they wanted to do was to make sure that, you know, there was room for an Inaugural Parade.

You have no mention of anything they wanted—they, the White House, whoever they are, wanted to make sure with respect to the residents and the commuters who also have to be accounted for in any humane discussion of what ought to be done here.

I need to ask—it pains me to see what has happened to these agencies who had a very good relationship with the District. And I think that some of this can be repaired.

I'd like to ask Mr. Slater, say to Mr. Slater, what is missing from his report that most troubles me is any real assessment of the

broad economic impact of the traffic closure, particularly given the insolvency of the city. And I wonder how a study could possibly have been done without doing more than reporting, for example, that half of the businesses said they had been negatively affected, that you didn't need a consultant for.

Why is there no assessment of what has been the effect on, for example, office space that has become—that is the major business here, except for tourism, office space that must be clearly devalued because you can't get to some office space as easily as you could before?

Merchants whose business depended upon access to people from across town, why is that not in this study?

Mr. SLATER. First of all, I think that is a good question. The objective of the study was to just deal primarily with the traffic problems resulting from the restriction.

We did give some consideration to businesses that were directly located within the region—I mean, within the area, but I think what we need is a really thorough, comprehensive transportation analysis of the entire District region. The last time that that was done was at least 30 years ago. This is something that we discovered as we were looking into this matter, and I think it would be appropriate for us to work in partnership with the District to do just that.

Ms. NORTON. I was very interested in what you said. This is another example from your testimony that seems to be something that is very, very useful to discuss. Especially considering what you said and what I did not know is that it looks like it's overdue because it hasn't been done in so long. When do you believe that such a comprehensive needs assessment could begin?

Mr. SLATER. I think that it can begin almost immediately.

Ms. NORTON. That a consultant could be hired by the administration to undertake that?

Mr. SLATER. Yes. Now, what I would like to do is—

Ms. NORTON. Did you consult—just a minute, did you consult with the District or did the consultant consult with the District before setting out his work plan? Or did he simply go on his own and try to figure out what to do?

Mr. SLATER. Well, the consultant primarily dealt with us. We did have some general contact with the District, but what we were trying to do was get an objective assessment of what was going on out there. This is a draft report. There is the opportunity for us to now build on what is there to make it much better, but still, it does not go to the degree that we have discussed during the course of this hearing, where you get into significant, long-range economic ramifications as relates to transportation and the economy of the District. That would mean going beyond just a consideration of the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue.

And that really is the broad approach that we have taken since really trying to develop a more positive and stronger working relationship with the District. That's why we were involved in the road tour in 1995. That was shortly after the closure, but we were looking at the Sousa Bridge and New York Avenue and all of the gateways coming into the District as well as downtown.

We actually met with the—there is a committee that deals with activities in and around The Mall that involves a number of governmental agencies as well as District representatives and the private sector. That effort is under way. And it really takes us to the next step of doing this really comprehensive and extensive study of the transportation needs of the District as a whole.

Ms. NORTON. My concern would be that the effects, particularly in this—let me begin again. My concern would be that with respect to Pennsylvania Avenue that that part of the study incorporates the effects on businesses and on the environment.

Mr. SLATER. OK. We did as much of that as we thought—or the consultant did as much of it as we thought necessary as we were focusing just on the restrictions as relates to Pennsylvania Avenue. But, clearly, we discovered as we got into it that you had congestion, you had problems with the signalization on these routes that have experienced it even more so as a result of the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue.

A more comprehensive study that would get into environmental and economic concerns as it relates to the transportation needs of the District as a whole would give us, I believe, the kind of information that you're talking about, that will help us as we go forward in making strategic transportation decisions.

Ms. NORTON. If we are talking about a comprehensive traffic needs assessment, the kind you've just described, that would begin early in a nonadversarial way, then I think we are talking about something very useful, especially since at least the chairman and I have not said, open up Pennsylvania Avenue right away. But we can't say that the state of affairs that we now find is acceptable, and we are not convinced that there are other options and until we study the record and get more information, we will not be convinced of that.

Nevertheless, your area is simply one that we have to deal with right away. There are streets around the White House that are simply impassable in nonrush-hour hours. I have been on those streets myself. My own office, by the way, as it turns out, is at 15th and I—so I know what I am talking about. I am talking about my District office now.

Your commitment there is very important, because the 30 to 50 percent more congestion in Constitution Avenue, H, I, and K Streets is simply going to kill downtown. We expect not less traffic, but more traffic on the ordinary course of business, what business is left.

We are talking about a city that is going to get more congestion anyway because of the good fortune we have with the convention center and the arena. You could kill those projects, or some of what those projects stand for, just by the traffic mess that Pennsylvania Avenue is. This is very serious for us.

So you believe—let me make sure I understand it correctly. You believe that a consultant could be brought on almost immediately to begin work on the comprehensive traffic needs assessment?

Mr. SLATER. I believe that a consultant can. I do think, though, that we would have to look at resources that we would have available. The problem with appropriations is that they are given for particular purposes, and we then program them over the course of

a year. But when you consider that we are starting in June and that we do have the beginning of the fiscal year coming up in October, I think that we could manage something like that.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much. One more question about police presence. It really did make a difference when police were at the critical areas, just as the Congress keeps them down here at C Street and D Street and the rest during rush hour. It really did make a difference. With the police no longer there, it's every—if you will forgive me—man for himself, and the results are frightening.

Is it possible to get police—the kind of police presence that you helped us with before so that we can unsnarl the traffic? You are making people real angry on the traffic question alone, and I think that is part of what has happened here.

Mr. SLATER. That was, you know, a very unique situation in that it was right after the closure.

Ms. NORTON. Why is that any different from the fact that there are probably even more traffic problems here now?

Mr. SLATER. I understand.

One way that I think we may be able to help to a greater degree is to actually use some of the more advanced technology that's now available dealing with intelligent transportation systems so as to help with the signal system around the District, and we are working with DPW to do that sort of thing, but I think that that might have a much more substantial effect on the movement and the flow of traffic throughout the District.

Ms. NORTON. I don't know. I've never seen—I've never seen it. It may perhaps be the case, but I do want to say this for the record. I don't have any questions for poor Mr. Galvin and Mr. Lawson—I think because he is already coordinating the matter I am concerned about, and I won't have any questions; but I do want everybody to know, you know, what you are courting.

You are courting losing money in your own budgets. As between you and the District, the fact is that except for Highways, which has, out of its own budget, been generous to the District—and I will try to protect Highways for that reason, I want you to know—but the multitudinous agencies involved here, particularly the Secret Service and Treasury, are simply asking the Congress to do what it has just done on the Park Service preferred plan. It's asking us to find ways to deal with the reimbursement question since satisfactory action to do so after almost a year has not occurred. You ought to take that back to the folks who are in charge, and we haven't been able to find out who they are.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DAVIS. I will just be very brief. First of all, I thank all three of you for coming up today.

I would just note, Mr. Galvin, I have the letter from Bruce Babbitt where he asked the National Park Service to do basically what they are doing. I've read it, and you're not the guy, but I am upset about it.

Mr. GALVIN. You can yell at me.

Mr. DAVIS. It doesn't do any good. The report was written from Panetta to Babbitt, who sent it down to Roger Kennedy. But more

importantly, I think we are just going to make sure that there is no money spent on this from the Park Service.

Mr. GALVIN. Could I make a point about that?

Mr. DAVIS. Sure. It is a done deal.

Mr. GALVIN. We really did not intend to come up to the Congress and ask for \$45 million for this. There are many aspects of the preferred alternative or any of the other alternatives currently being considered—

Mr. DAVIS. I understand, but let me tell you—

Mr. GALVIN [continuing]. Which can be done incrementally on a maintenance basis. Sidewalks need to be replaced.

Mr. DAVIS. You can't spend a penny on—

Mr. GALVIN. In 1997. I understand. I read the language.

Mr. DAVIS. That will solve it, and then we can come back and rereview this. I hope we can come back and get the President to address this himself and some of the concerns that we feel now. I think if it is elevated to that level, maybe we will make some difference.

Ms. NORTON. Will the gentleman yield? In 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002.

Mr. GALVIN. We intend to follow the direction of Congress on this, and we intend to come back and request the necessary funds from them.

Mr. DAVIS. Fine. I appreciate you being here. I really do. And I would just say, I think, as I read the letter and everything else, I see why you did what you did. I see how these things get started sometimes with the best of intentions. And one of the difficulties has been not coordinating with the city, Mr. Lawson, you understand as we go through these difficult decisions downtown, we are saying please try to work with the city. You have a mandate from Congress on the one hand that you have to comply with, and on the other hand, you have to show some sensitivity to the local concerns; and I think Ms. Norton has adequately expressed that and you understand it.

Mr. LAWSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. As long as we continue to dialog, we can avert any confrontations down the road. Mr. Slater, I know your immediate response to assist the District after the closings was allowing it to use Federal highway aid money to pay its overtime and for signs and traffic—and I think that was great. But basically, that just allows the city to rob Peter to pay Paul, which is better than not allowing it to do that.

I still think the city has suffered because of this, the city and the businesses. We have to try to find a way to make it whole. That is not in your gentlemen's bailiwick, but we intend to take that up with the administration; and from what I heard today from Treasury, they are reviewing that at this point. We hope a satisfactory response will go a long way toward assuaging some of the feelings.

I think that doesn't solve the issue because it still begs the larger issue, security versus what is happening to the traffic impacts and the future along Pennsylvania Avenue; but that would go a long way and that is something that is immediately doable, and we will work with you all any way that we can. I could ask more, but I

just appreciate your being here at this point; your testimony is now in the record so I will let you go. Thank you very much.

Mr. DAVIS. The sixth panel will consist of Timothy Coughlin, president of the Riggs National Corp.; Robert S. Krebs, vice president, regional affairs, the Greater Washington Board of Trade; Tom Wilbur, president of the D.C. Building Industry Association; Lon Anderson, staff director, AAA Potomac; and Christopher Reutershan, District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce.

All of you, along with the residents of the region, are vital stakeholders in this matter and I thank you for being willing to testify.

I would just ask for the last two panels to keep their remarks to 5 minutes. Your total written statements will be put in the record. You can highlight while you are up here and try to hold it to 5 minutes.

I think you have all been advised that it is the policy of the committee that all witnesses be sworn in. If you would rise with me and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much. Please be seated. The subcommittee will carefully review the written statements. I am going to start with Mr. Coughlin, followed by Mr. Krebs, Mr. Wilbur, Mr. Anderson, and Mr. Reutershan.

We can just go straight down the row. Why don't we start with Coughlin, Anderson, Wilbur, and Reutershan.

STATEMENTS OF TIMOTHY COUGHLIN, PRESIDENT, RIGGS NATIONAL CORP.; ROBERT S. KREBS, VICE PRESIDENT, REGIONAL AFFAIRS, THE GREATER WASHINGTON BOARD OF TRADE; TOM WILBUR, PRESIDENT, D.C. BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION; LON ANDERSON, STAFF DIRECTOR, AAA POTOMAC; AND CHRISTOPHER REUTERSHAN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. COUGHLIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You will be happy to know I have taken your instructions of 5 minutes seriously and will not go over that time limit.

Mr. DAVIS. You have got 4½ minutes.

Mr. COUGHLIN. Fairly said.

Mr. DAVIS. Riggs, probably more than any other single business right there on the corner, has been impacted and we are very interested in what you have to say on this.

Mr. COUGHLIN. Thank you and you each hit upon a key point. Riggs National Corp. is the oldest banking company headquartered in the Nation's capital. Its main office is in the Corcoran Building located at 1503 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC, which has been the site of Riggs' primary banking hall virtually from the day Riggs first opened its doors for business in 1836.

Constructed during the period 1899–1902, Riggs' main office is a historic landmark and one of the most outstanding examples of neoclassical bank architecture in the country. Riggs' main office is Riggs Bank's most important branch with several hundred million dollars in deposits. Riggs' main office is also the location of Riggs' board room and Riggs' chairman and chief executive office, Joe L. Allbritton.

It would be difficult if not impossible to overstate the detrimental impact imposed upon Riggs by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. I doubt any other business has been as adversely affected as Riggs.

Riggs is the single commercial business establishment between 15th and 17th Streets, NW., to which public access is only from Pennsylvania Avenue, and now this section of Pennsylvania Avenue is no longer open. Thousands of existing and potential customers who live and work in the Washington area used to come each day by Riggs' main office which was a thriving place of new business. Since Pennsylvania Avenue was closed 12 months ago, Riggs' main office has had a significant reduction in new customers. The estimated loss of new accounts is several million dollars per year, and existing accounts with Riggs' main office customers are in jeopardy. People are not readily willing to cross a police line to do their banking business, particularly those who would be coming to Riggs for the first time.

Subsequent to the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, Riggs has worked closely with the National Park Service to make the best of a bad situation. The National Park Service has cooperated with Riggs to provide vehicular access to Riggs' main office for customers and armored cars with enough space for limited parking and turnaround. However, notwithstanding the best efforts of the National Park Service under the circumstances, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets continues to have a devastating impact on business at Riggs Bank. For Riggs' main office, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has taken new customers away from us. They now no longer come to us, they drive around us. They don't even know we are there, and our existing customers who know we are there have logistical problems in getting to us.

The whole environment in our downtown neighborhood has changed as well. Traffic on surrounding streets is overly congested and frequently in a gridlock standstill. Only the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue could restore the significant loss in value of Riggs' main office brought about by closing Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, NW.

Riggs, like every American, is deeply concerned with the President's safety, yet there must be some other way to provide adequate protection for the President short of closing Pennsylvania Avenue. As it stands now, the ability of Riggs' main office to attract business has been thwarted and we are suffering seriously adverse consequences from the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. Our landmark main office which used to be in the center of the financial district of the Nation's capital has been cut off from the flow of commerce in the city it has served for 160 years. Not wishing the President to be exposed to undue risk, we can only hope that somehow a way will be found to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue and still provide for the President's safety.

Thank you very much.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Coughlin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY C. COUGHLIN, PRESIDENT, RIGGS NATIONAL CORP.

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Mr. ANDERSON. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

First, let me say I am sure glad I am on your side on this one. On behalf of our nearly 800,000 members in the Washington metropolitan area, many of whom drive into the District of Columbia on a daily basis, we appreciate the opportunity to offer this testimony.

I, too, will be very brief and just note that, like the Park Service, we too did some scoping out. Only we hired the Gallup to scope out what citizens in the region thought about Pennsylvania Avenue closing, and probably not unsurprisingly we found on a scientifically conducted poll that about 70 percent of residents felt that

something other than the status quo needed to be done, and 40 percent, the largest block by far, wanted the avenue reopened.

So I think it is fair to say that the region's citizens have a very strong opinion about what has been done to Pennsylvania Avenue and they also have some very strong opinions about how to correct it and they support—as I say, 70 percent said, give us back Pennsylvania Avenue or give us a tunnel, give us some other route, but the status quo just doesn't work.

We, too, of course are concerned about the safety of the President and chief executive, and we certainly want that to be kept top of the mind, but we would urge that a thoroughly balanced approach, one that will provide reasonable security for the White House but also considers the desires and impacts on local citizens, will ensure that our Nation's Capital is not transformed into a secure fortress Washington but an immobilized Capital City that make it difficult for people to visit here and to conduct commerce here.

Thank you very much.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Anderson follows:]

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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform
and Oversight
District of Columbia Subcommittee

**AAA Potomac's Poll Findings Concerning
The Closure of Pennsylvania Avenue
June 7, 1996**

Delivered by Mahlon G. "Lon" Anderson
Staff Director
Public and Government Relations

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, AAA Potomac appreciates the opportunity to comment on the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue and ancillary restrictions. On behalf of our nearly 800,000 members in the greater Washington area, many thousands of whom drive in the District on a daily basis, thank you for your consideration of our views.

We certainly understand that last year's closure of Pennsylvania Avenue was deemed necessary to protect the President, his family, and the many thousands who either work in or visit the White House, and we share that concern and do not want anything done to jeopardize their safety. Yet, we applaud this Committee and the Congress for seeking a full public discussion while considering the current questions: should that closure be made permanent, and should funding be provided for the conversion of Pennsylvania Avenue if it is to be permanently closed?

Pennsylvania Avenue is a major cross-town artery; its closure inexorably costs us a degree of mobility, particularly during peak travel periods when parallel routes have limited excess capacity to take on Pennsylvania Avenue's six lanes of traffic, some 26,000 vehicle trips daily. Others with more specific traffic counts and extensive traffic engineering reviews can better address the extent of the delays and the damage to mobility, with all of the attendant ramifications. What we at AAA Potomac undertook this year was to find out what the public thought should be done concerning Pennsylvania Avenue.

As part of our AAA Potomac annual transportation poll that we conduct to gauge attitudes among our area's motorists, we surveyed local residents on their views concerning our nation's Main Street.

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AAA Potomac
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DC area residents sent a very strong message: about 70 percent favored either reopening or constructing additional arteries or tunnels to accommodate traffic. Forty percent of local residents, the largest single block by far, favored reopening Pennsylvania Avenue. (For your information, I have attached the question and detailed responses.)

We believe that our poll, which was conducted according to generally accepted and statistically reliable public research techniques by the Gallup organization just a few months ago, provides an accurate and clear depiction of local public sentiment.

Without question, AAA Potomac fully supports prudent and practical measures to safeguard lives, particularly those of our nation's Chief Executive, his family and staff, but we urge that before permanent action is taken, all consequences of such measures be considered with great care.

A thoroughly balanced approach, one that will provide reasonable security for the White House, but also considers the desires of and impacts on local citizens, will ensure that our Nation's Capital is not transformed into a secure Fortress Washington but an immobilized capital city.

Thank you.

Question: "The terrorism-related closure of Pennsylvania Avenue and westbound E Street around the White House has greatly increased downtown congestion. Of the following options to relieve downtown congestion, which one would you support?"

Table 19
Proposed Options to Relieve Downtown Congestion

Relief Options	AAA Potomac (n=1116)	DC (n=268)	VA (n=421)	Potomac MD (n=426)	Potomac MD (n=175)	AAA Mid- Atlantic (n=51)	VA Mid- Atlantic (n=51)	MD Mid- Atlantic (n=124)
Reopening Pennsylvania Ave. to vehicular traffic	37%	40%	36%	37%	37%	37%	27%	41%
Construct a Pennsylvania Ave. tunnel between 15th and 17th streets	14	15	13	13	13	20	10	
Doing nothing and relying on other routes	33	31	35	34	8	12	6	
Reopening E Street to two-way traffic by directing westbound traffic across current park land	7	4	8	8	11	12	10	
Constructing a Pennsylvania Ave tunnel and reopening E Street to two-way traffic	9	11	9	8	31	29	31	

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Wilbur, we are glad to have you here today to testify for both AOBA and the District of Columbia Building Industry Association.

I was struck by the number of large building projects that were either on-line or were about to go on-line in the downtown area. It is good news for the long-term civility of this city. Maybe you can explain how the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue endangers this type of activity.

Mr. WILBUR. You are exactly right, it has had a tremendous effect on us, and it is only going to get worse over time.

Let me introduce myself. I am senior vice president of the John Akridge Co.'s. We are a local real estate development firm. I am also a resident, maybe one of the first ones, of the District of Columbia, ward 3, so I have a certain amount at stake.

First of all, on behalf of our membership, I want to make it clear that the safety of the President, his family, and the White House staff are really of paramount importance to all of us as citizens of the United States. We do not believe that the District of Columbia and our members would be well-served by subjecting the President and the White House to unreasonable security risks. However, we are very concerned about the methods in which the security is provided while considering the interests of the local community and the Nation as a whole.

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and other streets bounding the White House by the administration has been very detrimental to the commerce of the city. To date, however, its real impact is going to be felt over the years. Leases in buildings in Washington, DC, are generally 5 to 10 years in duration so people are prisoners where they are at for some period of time, but those leases roll over over a period of time and at that point people make their decisions on where they are going to stay. And obviously the big reason people are in the District of Columbia is for convenience, and this is something that has changed the complexion of our city considerably.

One does not need to perform a traffic analysis to understand that the current street system, as modified a year ago, just doesn't work. Our city has effectively been divided into an east and west side with crosstown access being so difficult that many people just simply avoid it.

The two principal reasons for conducting business in the city, proximity and convenience, have been severely compromised. The opening next year of the 20,000 seat MCI Arena and the 3 million square foot Ronald Reagan Building is the biggest Federal office building in the country outside of the Pentagon at Pennsylvania Avenue and 14th Street will further exacerbate this situation. With a world class opera house and state-of-the-art convention center, again both on the east end of town, soon to follow, there is little doubt the gridlock will be a normal experience all day long in our city as we approach the new millennium.

This would indeed be a sad development for our Nation's Capital City. The scale and the quality of structures in this city, the transportation plan laid out by L'Enfant over 200 years ago, and our modern Metro system have made our city a very friendly place for tourists, residents, commuters, and businesspersons alike. The clos-

ing of these streets, particularly Pennsylvania Avenue, has significantly deteriorated the quality of life which is hard to measure exactly in economic terms from our—particularly considering our present predicament right now with middle-class taxpayers and businesses fleeing the District of Columbia.

In a free democratic society, we will always have to balance the importance of security and providing open access and interaction with the President, but I would like to concur with a lot of the comments I heard today that we are very concerned with the recent reports that President Clinton is really relying on the Secret Service to make this decision on the status of these street openings.

We believe this decision is one that must be made by the President and cannot be delegated to the Secret Service. The Secret Service's sole mission is to protect the President. This is a very important mission but also a very narrow one. Based on history, we would imagine that the Secret Service would not encourage the President's personal interaction with the public, such as daily jogging and attendance at town meetings, sporting events and cultural events in public spaces. Notwithstanding, the President engages in these relatively high-risk activities in order to stay in touch with the American people. Likewise, we feel it is the President's decision to open Pennsylvania Avenue for the American people.

Our proposal in this situation is not a radical one either. While we would like to see Pennsylvania Avenue opened immediately, this may not be the most prudent approach. Alternative security measures and systems such as have been discussed earlier need to be studied and implemented. We need to find solutions that reduce the security risks at much lower economic and psychological costs than the current situation.

Our proposal is simple. We just hope that you will join us in requesting that President Clinton get together a new task force or possibly just get the task force that has already been put together and instruct them explicitly to find alternative methods to provide security for the White House and would allow the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue and set a deadline for that. We suggest that deadline be by Inauguration Day of next year.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify today.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wilbur follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION AND THE APARTMENT AND OFFICE BUILDING ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, DELIVERED BY THOMAS W. WILBUR, PRESIDENT, D.C. BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

On behalf of the District of Columbia Building Industry Association ("DCBIA") and the Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington ("AOBA"), I appreciate the opportunity to offer this testimony to the District of Columbia Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight with respect to the federal response to the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and the impact of that closing on the District. Patricia Hudson, president of AOBA, regrets that she could not be here with me today.

For your information, DCBIA and AOBA comprise over 725 member organizations and several thousand individuals ranging from lenders, property owners, developers, property managers, construction companies, contractors, subcontractors, architects, engineers, lawyers, accountants and others involved in the real estate industry. In other words, we represent those who finance, own, develop, build, renovate, up-

grade, improve and manage real property in the District of Columbia, along with all of the providers of additional services required by the real estate industry.

First of all, we want to make it very clear that the safety of the President, his family and the White House staff are of paramount importance to all of us as citizens of the United States. We do not believe that the District of Columbia and our members would be well served by subjecting the President and the White House to unreasonable security risks. However, we are very concerned about the methods in which this security is provided while considering the interests of the local community and the nation as a whole.

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and other streets bounding the White House, by the Administration, has been detrimental to the commerce of our city. One does not need to perform a traffic analysis to understand that the current street system, as modified a year ago, does not work. Our city has effectively been divided into an east and west side with cross town access being so difficult that many people simply avoid it. The two principal reasons for conducting business in the city—proximity and convenience—have been severely compromised. The opening next year of both the 20,000 seat MCI Arena and the 3 million square foot Ronald Reagan Building at Pennsylvania and 14th Street, will further exacerbate the situation. With a world class Opera House and state of the art Convention Center soon to follow, there is little doubt that gridlock will be a normal experience in our city as we approach the new millennium.

This would indeed be a sad development for our nation's capital city. The scale and quality of our structures, the transportation plan laid out by L'Enfant over 200 years ago, and our modern Metro system have made our city a very friendly place to tourists, residents, commuters and business persons alike. The closing of these streets, particularly Pennsylvania Avenue, has significantly deteriorated the quality of life in our city and consequently casts a long shadow over this city's prospects for emerging from our present predicament with middle class taxpayers and businesses fleeing the District of Columbia.

In a democratic free society, we will always have to balance the importance of security versus providing open access and interaction with the President. We are concerned of recent reports that President Clinton is relying on the Secret Service to make the decision on the status of these streets. We believe this decision is one that must be made by the President and cannot be delegated to the Secret Service. The Secret Service's sole mission is to protect the President. This is a very important mission but also a very narrow one. Based on history, we imagine the Secret Service would not encourage the President's personal interaction with the public, such as daily jogging and attendance at town meetings, sporting events and cultural events in public spaces. Notwithstanding, the President engages in all of these activities in order to stay in touch with the American people. Likewise, we feel it should be the President's decision to open Pennsylvania Avenue for the American people.

Our proposal for the situation is not a radical one. While we would like to see Pennsylvania Avenue opened immediately, this may not be the most prudent approach. Alternative security measures and systems such as structural reinforcement, improved fencing, limited traffic on adjacent streets to cars only and other traffic controls should be studied and implemented. We need to find solutions that reduce security risks at much lower economic and psychological costs than the current situation.

We request that President Clinton establish a task force with the absolute directive to find alternate means of providing adequate security for the White House so that these streets, including Pennsylvania Avenue, are reopened by Inauguration Day 1997.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to testify and your kind attention.

Mr. DAVIS. Chris.

Mr. REUTERSHAN. Thank you. I am a partner in a local real estate company also. I am also a resident of the District of Columbia. In fact, I live seven blocks from the White House. I may be one of Mr. Clinton's closest neighbors.

I am here today representing the District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce. We are a member of its Economic Development Committee. Needless to say, we are very opposed to the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House. The Chamber represents over 850 businesses and professionals that do business in Washington, DC, every day. The Chamber is a primary advocate of business

in the District of Columbia. In that role, the Chamber is committed to creating a positive climate for our business and an environment that will nurture and grow our economic base.

We are really concerned about the adverse financial public relations consequences that the closure is having on the District of Columbia, government, our business community, our residents, and the tourists that visit this city. Basically, and I read your testimony, Mr. Davis, I agree with you and we agree with you that what the government has done built essentially a Berlin Wall, an impassable wall that has divided this city, this capital city into two separate districts, two separate cities: East and West Washington.

Let us understand what the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue really means. The downtown office market, as Congressmember Norton mentioned, has over 90 million square feet of office space. Makes it 1 of the 10 largest cities in the United States from a business standpoint. That space is virtually equally divided on either side of the White House. Our traditional central business district and the west end Georgetown areas have over 42 million square feet. The east end and what we call the Capitol Hill subareas have an additional 50 million square feet.

Now you know I hate people that throw numbers around and expect people to understand what they mean, so let's put it this way: Either side of our city represents the 17th and the 19th largest cities individually in the United States. Either side of this city is larger than Charlotte, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Fort Worth, Hartford, Kansas City, Miami, Orlando, Pittsburgh, Sacramento, St. Louis, or Seattle. And yet these two major cities are supposed to function smoothly with a single arterial K Street and two jerry-rigged side streets and that is why we are here today.

Closing Pennsylvania Avenue and the western lane of E Street have removed about 30 or 40 percent of the crosstown street capacity depending on who you listen to. The physical communication between these two areas, these two what had been a single city have become a major exercise in frustration for everyone. I can say personally every time I go downtown I curse under my breath. I am not alone. This is a problem that everyone is talking about, and aside from a couple of skateboarders, no one is really happy about it. We are not talking about idle browsing by a small group of malcontents as is often the case. This is serious talk by serious people.

We have got a permanent gridlock and something has to be done with it. Tourism is our No. 1 industry. This new wall on Pennsylvania Avenue either directly or subliminally sends a message to tourists that Washington, DC, is unsafe.

Now, we all know our tourist industry has spent millions of dollars over the last few years trying to promote this city as a safe place to visit and to stay. As with everyone else, we don't have the exact numbers as to what the economic impact is, but it doesn't take a genius to figure out when you have half the city moving back and forth every day taking an extra 20, 30 minutes, it is costing somebody something. The extra personnel costs, the increased and unreimbursed cost to all of our taxi drivers, decreased retail revenues, and finally a decrease in the value of our real estate, as Tom mentioned, are significant problems.

Let me just end that we are concerned the District was not consulted. We are concerned that it doesn't really even appear that the locally elected officials are part of the process. I hope they become part of the process. And speaking on behalf of both myself and the DC Chamber of Commerce, we are ready to do whatever it takes and whatever you need to get this avenue reopened again.

Thank you.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Reutershan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER REUTERSHAN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Good morning, Congressman Davis and members of the District of Columbia Subcommittee. My name is Christopher Reutershan. I am a Partner with Concord Partners, LLC, a real estate development services company located at 1336 Vermont Avenue, NW, in the District of Columbia. I am also a resident of The District of Columbia. I am here today representing the District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce where I am a member of its Business and Economic Development Committee. I am here today to testify in opposition to the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

Representing over 850 businesses and professionals who do business in Washington, DC everyday, the District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce is the primary advocate for business in the District of Columbia. In that role, the Chamber is committed to creating a positive climate for business and an environment that will nurture and grow our economic base. These goals are paramount, especially at a time when the District continues to grapple with the most difficult challenge of its short life: establishing itself on a sound and independent financial footing.

I am here today to strongly oppose the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. What the federal government built at each end of the 1600 Block of Pennsylvania Avenue last year was, in effect, a "Berlin Wall"; an impassable wall which has divided our city's central business district into two separate districts (two separate cities).

The DC Chamber was and continues to be concerned about the adverse financial and public relations consequences that the closure is having on the District Government and Business Community as well as its Residents and Tourists.

Like the Berlin Wall, the Pennsylvania Avenue Wall's construction was mandated against the will of the residents of this city. It was a measure taken without adequate consultation, by those with no real stake in the community most affected by that decision. The citizens of Washington were not consulted about the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. It was simply done by fiat.

Like the Berlin Wall of the Cold War era, we now have two separate districts, two separate cities: East Washington and West Washington.

Let us understand what the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue and the westbound lane of E Street really means to the City.

Historically, the Principal Business Area in the District was our so-called Golden Triangle—our Central Business District. This has been defined as the area bounded by K Street on the South, New Hampshire Avenue on the West, Massachusetts Avenue on the north and 16th Street on the east. Had Pennsylvania Avenue been closed in 1980, hardly an eyelid would have fluttered because virtually all of Washington's businesses operated within this limited area. However, since the 1980's, the business community's concept of the Central Business District has dramatically shifted to now include the eastern portion of the downtown. Today the so-called East End comprises an area bounded by 15th Street on the west, Massachusetts Avenue on the north, Pennsylvania Avenue on the south and E Street on the East. Half of this city's 50 largest law firms relocated to this area. This includes the city's five largest law firms. The East End is the fastest growing economic sub-area in the District quite simply because the old Golden Triangle is full. Today, our central business district can now be defined as both the old Golden Triangle and the new East End.

But our city extends beyond these two central areas. To the west of the Central Business District, is the West End/Georgetown sub-market and to the east of the East End is the Capitol Hill sub-market, an area well known to our members of Congress. These areas are also large and active markets which require transportation access between all of the other areas.

The downtown office market, comprises over 90 million square feet of space in these four previously mentioned sub-markets: Georgetown/West End, Golden Triangle, the East End and Capitol Hill.

These markets are almost equally distributed on each side of the White House. The Georgetown/West End and Golden Triangle areas comprise 42.2 million square feet and the East End/Capitol Hill areas contain approximately 49.6 million square feet. You know I hate people that throw around numbers like you are supposed to know what they mean. If either East or West Washington was a separate city they individually would be the 17th and 19th largest cities in America. Yes they each are larger than Charlotte, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Fort Worth, Hartford, Kansas City, Miami, Orlando, Pittsburgh, Sacramento, St. Louis, Seattle or Stamford, Conn. And yet these two major cities are supposed to function smoothly with a single arterial and two Jerry-rigged side streets? This is why we are here!

Today, physical communication between these two areas has become a major exercise in frustration for everyone; everyone who has to move back and forth between the different parts of our city. At some time or another that includes just about everyone in the city. This is a problem that virtually everyone is talking about. And aside from a few skate-boarders, no one is happy about it.

Let me be clear, we are not talking about some idle grousing by a small group of malcontents. This is serious talk among serious people, this is why we are here today.

In linking the city's business district from East to West, H and I Streets have always played an important role as secondary routes (side streets). However, it is both Pennsylvania Avenue and K Street that were designed as the city's primary cross-town thoroughfares for the downtown business areas north of the White House. While Constitution and Mass Avenues can and do play a role, they are not part of the direct passage system. With the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue, both H and I Streets have been given roles they were never meant to have. Quite frankly, they simply are not up to the job. This is obvious.

The additional pressure on H, I and K Streets has created a permanent gridlock on all three streets throughout the business day. This is especially true at mid-day as businessmen, residents and tourists seek to travel back and forth across town.

Tourism is our city's number one private industry. The new Pennsylvania Avenue "Wall" either subliminally or directly sends the message to tourists that Washington, DC is unsafe. The local tourism industry has spent millions of dollars over the past years promoting the city as a safe place to visit and to stay. And, now, we have the Pennsylvania Avenue "Wall".

While it is still too early to have figures on what the closing has cost the city and the business community it is clear that it has resulted in tremendous costs. The concern that we raised last year about the Pennsylvania Avenue closing separating the District into two "downtowns" has now become a reality. Without vehicular access to the closed portion of Pennsylvania Avenue, it is burdensome and time consuming for drivers to travel from K Street and Connecticut Avenue on the west to the commercial areas of the east. This comes at a time when we are working as a community to establish continuity in business activity across the District.

What the federal government has done is given business yet another reason to leave town for the suburbs. And I know, Congressman Davis, that while the folks in Northern Virginia don't mind the company, neither you nor your constituents want to get it in this fashion.

We will not comment on whether or how to protect the President of our country. We will note, however, that throughout periods of much greater stress including a civil war, and the two world wars of this century, the Avenue has remained open, an iconographic symbol that until the past year has been clearly understood and respected by the rest of the world.

We have heard that the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue was due to concern for the safety of the President. In many peoples' minds it was a knee jerk reaction that, at most, should have been a temporary measure. Moving forward, the nature, extent and circumstances surrounding the closing should not ultimately be resolved without substantial input from District officials. To exclude our District's elected officials from the decision-making process has deprived our residents and businesses of the opportunity to shape their own future.

We hope that all further discussions regarding a permanent solution to the Pennsylvania Avenue reconfiguration will involve District government officials and address the concerns of the business community. The District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce stands ready to assist this Committee and the federal government in efforts to devise a long-term strategy for improving security around the White House in a way that is not an undue burden on District residents and businesses. We would like to see the Pennsylvania Avenue "Wall" torn down and our two separate cities reunited once again.

Thank you for the privilege of addressing you today.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Krebs.

Mr. KREBS. Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, the Board of Trade is pleased to address the concerns of the business community regarding the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. We speak out for approximately 1,100 businesses throughout our region. Our membership is based roughly one-third each in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. However, because we are a regional organization, nearly 50 percent of our membership has an address within the District. We are before you today to articulate the concern our member businesses have expressed over the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The instances you have heard today, from our members and others of the business community, more clearly explain the day-to-day unprecedented ordeal this closing has caused. Property value, marketability of office space, disrupted parking, frustrated small business customers, transportation accessibility, traffic alternate capacity problems, confused cross-city mobility, compounded by the tens of thousands of daily commuters and nonregional visitors to the area have combined to produce nothing less than a nightmare for the business community in the heart of the District. Just recently, the Board of Trade sent a letter of support to Senator Rod Grams regarding his resolution to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue, and I would like to submit that letter for the record.

Mr. DAVIS. Without objection, so ordered.

[The letter referred to follows:]



Board of Trade Building
1129 20th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-857-8900
FAX: 202-223-2648

May 13, 1996

Chair
Joseph T. Boyle
Managing Partner, Midatlantic Area
KPMG Peat Marwick LLP

The Honorable Rod Grams
U.S. Senate
SD-261 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grams:

On behalf of the Greater Washington Board of Trade's membership, I applaud your efforts to reopen the 1600 block of Pennsylvania Avenue and offer whatever assistance this organization might provide. As a representative of over 1,000 businesses located in the greater Washington region, we have heard from many of our members about the impact that the street closing has had on their businesses. In short, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, paired with the closing of the parallel section of E Street between 15th and 17th Streets, has resonated throughout the District of Columbia's road system. The resulting gridlock is, at best, impeding the mobility of business people, residents and tourists.

Of even greater concern is the likelihood that this is just the beginning of an imposing security trend; already we have heard rumors that additional street closings will occur. Street closings cannot be an appropriate solution to security concerns; rather, they are nothing more than a "cure by amputation." Already, the Pennsylvania Avenue experiment has demonstrated the crippling effect such a policy has on traffic flow, and additional street closings would further exacerbate the difficulty of doing business in the District of Columbia.

In your April 29th letter to President Clinton, you cite the rich history of Pennsylvania Avenue as "America's Main Street" and its symbolism of freedom, openness and access to government. But equally important are the more direct economic impacts that the street closing has imposed on the operation of the District of Columbia. Traffic on surrounding streets has reportedly increased far beyond capacity, despite efforts by the local government and the Federal Highway Administration to create one way corridors traveling east and west to improve traffic flow. And while rush hour traffic has always

The Honorable Rod Grams
May 13, 1996
Page Two

been difficult, travel times across the downtown business district have more than doubled even during the mid-day hours.

Although many people consider Washington, DC to be only the home of the federal government, the City has a significant private sector community. A large number of those businesses are service oriented, requiring them to remain accessible to clients and customers. Thus, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is creating a hardship on the city's private sector, and in many cases, forcing them to reconsider whether they must relocate their operations outside of the District. In a city that is struggling to cope with dwindling revenues and the skyrocketing costs of human services, this is just one more factor contributing to the problems faced by the local government, the Congressionally appointed financial control board, and inevitably, the Congress in its role as steward of the Nation's Capital.

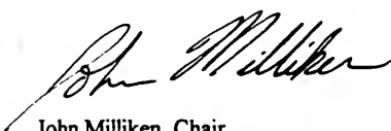
The business community recognizes that the safety of the President of the United States must be the top priority in decisions such as these. We believe, however, that there may be more appropriate alternatives that would sufficiently mitigate potential security risks without shutting down the Nation's Capital piece by piece.

A decision to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue would go a long way toward restoring mobility in the Nation's Capital. This is important to the people who live and work here every day, but it is also important to the millions of visitors who come from all 50 states. Should there be a decision to revisit the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, the Greater Washington Board of Trade would be happy to work with Congress, the Executive Branch and the local government to identify more realistic options for improving security in the Nation's Capital. Thank you for your efforts.

Sincerely,



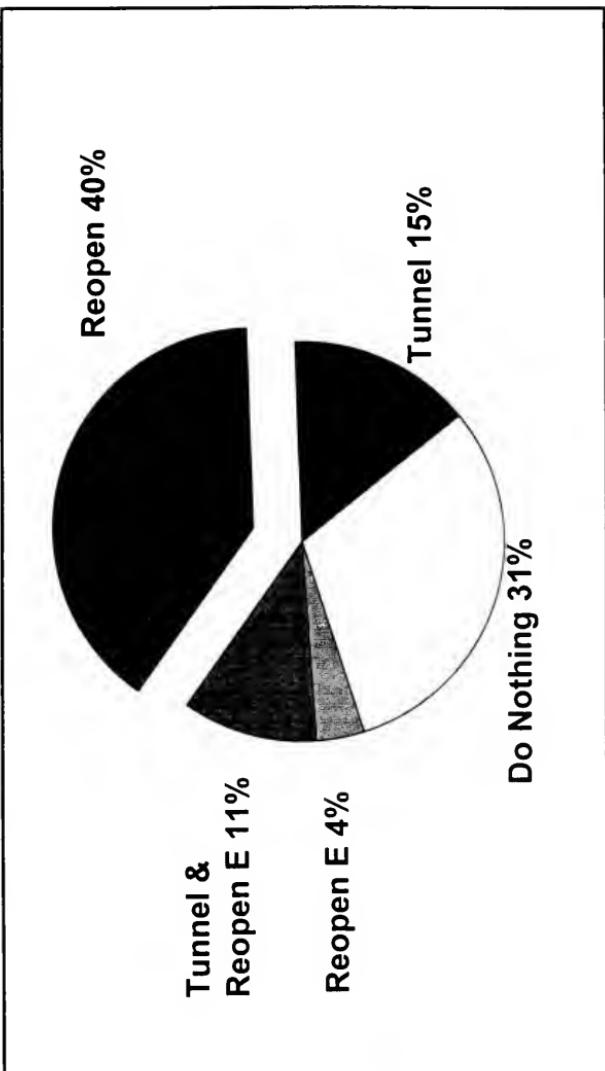
Joseph T. Boyle, Chair
(KPMG Peat Marwick)



John Milliken, Chair
Transportation & Environment Committee
(Venable, Baetjer and Howard, LLP)

Pennsylvania Avenue Closure: Survey Results

Gallup Poll Commissioned by AAA Potomac
District Residents



Question: "The terrorism-related closure of Pennsylvania Avenue and westbound E Street around the White House has greatly increased downtown congestion. Of the following options to relieve downtown congestion, which one would you support?"

Table 19
Proposed Options to Relieve Downtown Congestion

<u>Relief Options</u>	<u>AAA Potomac (n=1116)</u>	<u>DC (n=288)</u>	<u>Potomac VA (n=421)</u>	<u>Potomac MD (n=426)</u>	<u>AAA Mid- Atlantic (n=175)</u>	<u>VA Mid- Atlantic (n=51)</u>	<u>MD Mid- Atlantic (n=124)</u>
Reopening Pennsylvania Ave to vehicular traffic	37%	40%	36%	37%	37%	27%	41%
Construct a Pennsylvania Ave tunnel between 15th and 17th streets	14	15	13	13	13	20	10
Doing nothing and relying on other routes	33	31	35	34	8	12	6
Reopening E Street to two-way traffic by directing westbound traffic across current park land	7	4	8	8	11	12	10
Constructing a Pennsylvania Ave tunnel and reopening E Street to two-way traffic	9	11	9	8	31	29	31

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The Galtay Organization

Mr. KREBS. As we noted in that letter, the business community values, and is cognizant of, the important security issues that revolve around this problem. However, the business community believes this closure was activated in haste and ignored possible alternatives. Further, this was not a decision built on consensus which is normal business practice and governmental procedure.

According to Board of Trade member, AAA Potomac, the traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue's six lanes represents 26,000 vehicles a day. As you can see, diverting such traffic builds the frustration level daily to about 9.5 million drivers a year caught short, rerouted, with changed plans, late, in short, furious. All alternate routes are near capacity at rush hour not to mention the vehicles idling to deliver packages to buildings on the closed avenue. By many measures the Washington region has the second worst traffic in the Nation. That is compared to L.A. and New York in some instances. These commuters are trafficked out.

It is no surprise, therefore, that AAA Potomac's annual Gallup Poll, demonstrated this disappointment with clarity: Forty percent of District respondents, the largest single choice of several, provided options, favored reopening Pennsylvania Avenue. We have charted it for your perusal. Without question, the general public as well as the business community of the Washington region are dissatisfied with the sudden and abrupt closure of a main cross-city link.

In deference to the security of the First Family, we support reasonable and prudent measures, devised through an appropriate review process, that would take into account the businesses and private citizens affected by this closure before a permanent solution is found.

I want to add, Mr. Congressman, if I could, that it was brought to my attention that in the National Park Service display of the alternatives, the section of E Street that is closed off now is not even in the diagrams of the alternatives.

Second, I point out on the response National Park Service sheet, it says, the first question on the response sheet for your postage paid reply is, what do you particularly like about the preferred alternative? Well, I guess—I think they would like us to articulate why their preferred alternative should be the reason it should be chosen.

Mr. ANDERSON. Mr. Chairman, I think our Gallup Poll handled it a little differently. I don't think that is the way they started the question.

Mr. KREBS. Also, I did want to say as you know in Maryland and Virginia, whenever we go through building a road or any projects of any size, the environmental impact analysis always forces the analysis to include a no-build option and in the alternatives that are considered now there is no such option.

Thank you very much.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Krebs follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT KREBS, VICE PRESIDENT, REGIONAL AFFAIRS, THE GREATER WASHINGTON BOARD OF TRADE

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, the Board of Trade is pleased to address the concerns of the business community regarding the closing of Pennsylva-

nia Avenue. We speak out for approximately 1100 businesses throughout our region. Our membership is based roughly one-third each in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. However, because we are a regional organization, nearly 50% of our membership has an address within the District. We are before you today to articulate the concern our member businesses have expressed over the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The instances you have heard today, from our members and others of the business community, more clearly explain the day-to-day unprecedented ordeal this closing has caused. Property value, marketability of office space, disrupted parking, frustrated small business customers, transportation accessibility, traffic alternate capacity problems, confused cross-city mobility, compounded by the tens of thousands of daily commuters and non-regional visitors to the area have combined to produce nothing less than a nightmare for the business community in the heart of the District. Just recently, the Board of Trade sent a letter of support to Senator Rod Grams regarding his resolution to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue, and I would like to submit that letter for the record.

As we noted in that letter, the business community values, and is cognizant of, the important security issues that revolve around this problem. However, the business community believes this closure was activated in haste and ignored possible alternatives. Further, this was not a decision built on consensus which is normal business practice and governmental procedure.

According to Board of Trade member, AAA Potomac, the traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue's six lanes represents 26,000 vehicles a day. As you can see, diverting such traffic builds the frustration level daily to about 9.5 million drivers a year caught short, re-routed, with changed plans, late, in short, furious. All alternate routes are near capacity at rush hour not to mention the vehicles idling to deliver packages to buildings on the closed avenue. By many measures the Washington region has the 2nd worst traffic in the nation. That's compared to LA & N.Y. in some instances. These commuters are trafficked out!

It is no surprise therefore, that AAA Potomac's annual Gallup Poll, demonstrated this disappointment with clarity: Forty percent of District respondents, the largest single choice of several provided options, favored reopening Pennsylvania Avenue, we have charted it for your perusal. Without question, the general public as well as the business community of the Washington region are dissatisfied with the sudden and abrupt closure of a main cross-city link.

In deference to the security of the first family, we support reasonable and prudent measures, devised through an appropriate review process, that would take into account the businesses and private citizens affected by this closure before a permanent solution is found.

Thank you for holding this hearing and allowing the business community this opportunity to express these frustrations publicly.

Mr. DAVIS. The law of unintended consequences—I think we have seen it right here. You try to do one thing and do the right thing by it, but there are so many unintended consequences down the stream.

Riggs Bank has been here almost longer than any business in the city. Its headquarters are drying up. The city is trying to maintain business and attract business and you can't do it when you get kicked in the teeth by our government.

I am not sure we are part of the solution up here. We try to be. The way it works in the Congress, and now with the administration, which I don't think they are intending to hurt business, is that they make choices when they are oblivious to what the consequences could be. When they looked at Pennsylvania Avenue nobody was looking at how it would affect business. They listened to the Secret Service, who is doing its job, but it is only a piece of the puzzle. And that is what happened here.

We are hoping that this hearing today and comments by Ms. Norton and Senator Grams and others are saying we have to take a broader perspective. The White House is becoming a bunker, which is what you are turning it into because some sheik in New York makes a threat.

You heard the comment made earlier today, who wins under that? How is that victory? So these are difficult questions. Obviously, if I were to remove the barrier and somebody were to take advantage of the opportunity everybody would feel terrible, but we have survived many years without that and probably if you are long enough, I guess anything happens over thousands of years, but I think we have heard testimony today that there are other ways of mitigating this problem.

We are reacting still to the Oklahoma City bombing tragedy but there is nothing in anything we have passed in this Congress, anything the GSA has proposed, anything the Secret Service has proposed, that could have prevented that. Think about it. What could we have done to protect that? You can't guard every Federal building like that, so you have to put things in a perspective and get a total view. And that is what has not been done here.

The reports are late getting to the committee. Obviously, the administration doesn't want a lot of turmoil. I don't blame them for that. It is an election year. I think they are sincerely trying to do the right thing. I know Ms. Norton. Gives her no joy. And Mr. Moran having to come in and talk about the administration; it is frustrating not to see the total perspective, and we do represent local constituencies that are being adversely affected—and all politics is local. In this case we have to get the broader view, as well as local view, and coordinate that with the security view.

All of you have done a good job in trying to pronounce what is happening to the business in this city as a result of this. And just as importantly, what happens if this trend continues? GSA is going to be facing a number of issues down the road where they have to comply with the Anti-terrorism Act. How are they going to implement this? And Ms. Norton has eloquently stated some of the concerns she has and how this can get from bad to even worse.

I am not sure what our next move is from here except that we do have some appropriation bills this year; we are going to at least come back and have the agencies think of these decisions in that context. When you put it in a money context, all of a sudden priorities change, and I think we will take a stab at that. We have had some success already in the Interior. I think we will do it with the Treasury Postal and will continue to work this battle.

Tim, I don't know what to say about Riggs at this point. If we can't reopen it, I don't know what you do short of that. It is a main route. I ask you for any suggestions, short of opening the whole thing, which you may suggest?

Mr. COUGHLIN. I think it is often said a picture says 1,000 words. I have one picture I would like to show to you.

Mr. DAVIS. This was unrehearsed.

Mr. COUGHLIN. You can see this is a picture of our main office, our historic banking hall. It is beautiful. It is a six story atrium. It is the most attractive office we have for customers to come, and if you look I am sure you will agree it is beautiful. But what is wrong with this picture? There is no one in it. That is the problem in a nutshell. And it is really only opening Pennsylvania Avenue that can restore the business to the office that we have lost.

Mr. ANDERSON. Mr. Chairman, we too at AAA worry about the mobility in the city, and we are especially worried that the, per-

haps the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue will be a precedent in a city that is full of Federal office buildings, any one of which has a higher profile than the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Office Building in Oklahoma City and whose destruction would be an enormous tragedy telegraphed all over the Nation.

We just worry where the blockage is going to stop and when we are going to stop losing parking spaces in a city that needs more parking, not less, and more mobility, not less.

Who can imagine someone having a quarrel with the Justice Department or the IRS and where do we stop in a city full of Federal office buildings? Where do we protect mobility and say citizens have to have access to democracy versus trying to protect the people that work in those buildings? It is a difficult call. I think all of us here are very concerned about the impacts to the citizens and the businesses here.

Mr. DAVIS. Unintended consequences, unintended victims.

Mr. KREBS. We would just thank Ms. Norton for pressing Rodney to include an economic impact statement in the analysis of long-range District transportation planning, he is doing. Thank you very much for that. If there is some assistance we can give in that regard please contact us. Analysis has to come from an objective source.

Mr. DAVIS. We asked this last year too, and the committee's letters to Mr. Rubin were given a degree of consideration. They wanted to give them at the time but, as you know, Ms. Norton can be very tenacious. When she gets into an issue, she is fully engaged at this point and doesn't disappear at the end of the hearing. Let me yield.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank this panel. It has been very important for the chairman to meet and hear from truly the most affected parties, and you will know that although the chairman allowed a panel of local businesses and residents before, and even though the primary purpose of this hearing was to hear from those who he had not heard from, he has included panels once again because this is not an issue that can be discussed except in the context you bring to it.

I must tell you, Tim Coughlin, I actually heard, I forget who, I think I must want to block it. I have actually heard your office use Riggs as an example how a business is better off than it was before the closing because now you have parking places reserved for you. How would you respond to that?

Mr. COUGHLIN. Whoever told you that was no friend of the bank, No. 1, and No. 2, they obviously didn't know what they were talking about. The numbers I have given today are accurate. Our estimated loss of accounts is several million dollars per year.

Ms. NORTON. Say that again.

Mr. COUGHLIN. Several million dollars in lost accounts per year.

Ms. NORTON. I don't know how anybody thinks this city can remain standing with businesses losing like that. Many businesses consider this a loser just to be in this city. The notion that the city is putting any more upon you than you have already had to bear is deeply ungenerous to the city.

What is shocking to me is how little thought has been given by the agencies involved, with very few exceptions, to what might be

done at least in the short run to mitigate these services. Let me just say to you I think our problem is worse than we think.

By closing Pennsylvania Avenue, what the Secret Service has done is to raise the profile of the White House as a target. In doing so, it has had all kinds of, it seems to me, counterproductive effects. One, it makes it more difficult now to open it up. Because once you have targeted it in this high profile way by closing it down, it—you have already sent the message out to all the fools and fanatics when you open it up.

I think they have done a deeply injurious thing to security. Not to mention how they have now raised the target profile of every other building. I regard these people as knuckle heads, if you will forgive me. It is the kind of—it really is the kind of approach you would expect the—you know people, the least expert people, people who are deeply unimaginative. Lets—people who really have real deficits, professional and intelligence level deficits, and I say that meaning it. You hold people responsible for this through consequences of their actions beyond the first level analysis.

The first thing that would have occurred to your average high school student, if you asked him what do you do if you think the White House may be in danger, the street in front, the first thing he would say is close the thing off. But if you get him to—the first year of a good college, if he is able to get that far, he is probably analytical enough after saying that to say, let's see what would cause that?

My problem is that these are professionals who come forward pronouncing to the world that if it's not a target now, it will be. And essentially put—pasted a target on the White House that was not there before. Deeply unprofessional, and I am thinking—this is prelude to asking a question. What they have done is force me to have to think harder.

If in fact we have had real consultations beforehand so that we could have thought about alternatives, I—but we have really got to think harder now because if we are opened up tomorrow, we would have the problem of having already targeted the White House and perhaps a whole surge of people who never would have thought of it would have to think of it.

The Secret Service had called their attention to the White House as a target. I wonder if in your, because you are in the area because of the—specifically have Members or yourselves have specifically suffered from these problems, if you have thought yourselves about the kinds of alternatives pending opening of the avenue that might be more useful—most useful to downtown businesses, any of you.

Mr. REUTERSHAN. I think there is a basic issue here. I think you have hit on it, that where do you stop? Mr. Davis earlier made the comment, or maybe it was Mr. Moran about the Supreme Court, about the Capitol.

My wife dropped me off here this morning and went to look for a parking space, and I noted on my watch that it took her 35 minutes to get back here. That is the sort of thing we are talking about in this city.

Where do you end it? If the next crackpot comes along, the Freemasons do something out in Montana, OK, we have got to close

this street. We have got to close that street. Pretty soon you have the whole District closed. If someone is going to do something, they are going to find someplace to do it. You close off one, they will find another.

I think you are exactly right. You are putting ideas in people's minds and you are moving along and pandering to the terrorists. You are telling exactly how to to everyone who knows how to do it. If we are dealing with terrorists, we are caving in. God bless the President and everyone else, but there has got to be an end.

Mr. WILBUR. I personally think, one, the problem is when you look at how the decision was made and, again, it is kind of the classical management thing. You get a task force out there without giving them fairly good direction and specific direction I think you can come up with fairly radical decisions made.

In particular, with the timing of these events being such that they would take off more so than others, I have even heard in the past the Secret Service has had concern about National Airport and there was no improvements for several years being made to that. I think there was some concern whether that should be that close to the White House.

I think when this task force was given its direction, it would have been given direction that we have to provide security, but we are not going to shut off the city. We need to absolutely keep things open, and keep access to the Presidency, I think then they would have taken us out of the category of this particular incident of car bomb. They would have taken it out of the category of having it zero risk to that and move it closer to where you do—where a gentleman here earlier said that is not being—they look to get zero tolerance on. They try to limit it as much as they can.

It is along the spectrum of security is what you are talking about here. What happened is the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue got all of a sudden pushed into the point where, yes, this is expendable because we want to have zero tolerance, any kind of car bomb. As a result, we came up with this decision whereby security won out over all other considerations because the decision was made too quickly.

I believe strongly that it may be the same task force we had before. It may have been, though experts were all very good, they need now be told by the President that Pennsylvania Avenue has to be open, the street has to be open. Now you guys go out there and in 6 months you come back in with a plan to make that happen. Not in a day, but in 6 months or some period of time.

I personally think that having Pennsylvania Avenue closed for Inauguration Day next year would be a shame. Every 4 years is where our town shows itself off. To have that be what everybody sees, that Pennsylvania Avenue is closed off, with barriers with plants in them or whatever is out there at that time, I think, would be really a shame.

It is kind of a flawed procession that went through and because of some circumstances ended up kind of taking a certain risk, which is a real risk, and putting it into a different category than maybe where it should have been.

Mr. MORAN. I am personally offended that the only thing they told them to do was make sure they can march into Pennsylvania

Avenue on Inaugural Day. Somebody is dealing in a high level of sensitivity with this problem. Again, we are going to have to think harder now that they have proceeded in a counterproduction action.

A real working group, in order to deal with any hard problem, not only do you have to think hard, you have got to talk to a lot of folks and fertilize your mind. So impressing on the working group the notion because I want that to happen, I want them to hear from people like you who put another perspective in, who bring details that are not in their knowledge.

The terrorism is testing us and so far we are failing the test because we are using the same kinds of responses that we would have used if this was 1896 rather than 1996. The response shows absolutely no—absolutely no understanding of the modern period, none of the kind of imagination you'd expect to be brought to bear on a truly difficult problem such as this.

For example, one, the first place you might like to start is if we close Pennsylvania Avenue at night, we would eliminate considerable risk when nobody is using it, dusk hours, dark hours. If we are going to close it, you might want to say, all right, suppose we dealt with it at night that might be a heavy—a good percentage of the problem. Then what would that leave? And how best to deal with it assuming that zero—assuming that zero risk is impossible even in a totalitarian society, certainly in a democratic society.

Again, there are ways to think through hard problems. Who you want at the table are people who will intrude all of the—all the factors so that any executive, somebody who has run a difficult agency, you really want people to sit there and say, hey—who will give it back to you, who will say, hey, wait a minute. What about this? Who will not be reticent to step up and say this ought to be done. That is why I asked who was in charge because if the civil—if the Secret Service is in charge, they can't possibly ask themselves that question, as you heard them. But if the agencies have to sit by themselves and ask and talk to themselves, then we will never resolve this question. There is no cross-fertilization. I hope that a working group will be formed and above all I hope you will be available to work with such a working group.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you all very much. We appreciate it.

We have one last panel, Emily Vetter, president, Hotel Association of Washington, DC; William Lecos, president, Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington; and Jon Grove, executive vice president of the American Society of Association Executives.

It is our policy to swear the witnesses in. Please raise your right hand.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. DAVIS. We will start on the left this time and let you go first.

STATEMENTS OF EMILY D. VETTER, PRESIDENT, HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON, DC; WILLIAM LECOS, PRESIDENT, RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON; AND JON P. GROVE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

Ms. VETTER. Good Morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the District of Columbia Subcommittee of the Committee on Govern-

ment Reform and Oversight. Thank you very much for having this hearing today. We are grateful for this opportunity to discuss the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and its negative effect on our city.

The District is unique in many ways. One distinction is that we are a city whose No. 1 private sector economy is tourism and conventions, which means 20 million visitors a year. In addition, we have a residential population under 600,000 that swells to over 2 million per day because of commuters.

Most of these people, visitors and commuters, are trying to squeeze into a defined area I will call the downtown-Federal core: From the west end to the U.S. Capitol and from the southwest waterfront to Massachusetts Avenue.

Washington was designed, it has been rumored, to keep an invading army confused, not to help with the flow of 2 million commuters a day and 20 million visitors a year. Thanks to Mr. L'Enfant, we are a lovely city of avenues and circles, a charm which is also a traffic nightmare.

In spite of our excellent metro rail, these millions navigate by car, cab, and bus through our downtown-Federal core every day. While we can thank God that we are not a city of freeway ramps cutting through our beautiful vistas, we are, unfortunately, a 20th century city living with an 18th century traffic pattern.

With the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street behind the White House, we have a difficult situation. As the White House is smack in the middle of this downtown-Federal core, these closings cut the primary flow of commuter and visitor traffic almost in half. At best, H Street and I Street, any time of day or evening, are a mess. With one lane out for a disabled car or illegally parked car, it can take up to an hour to go five or six blocks.

How does this impact tourism? Frankly, most of our visitors do not drive in the city. Our industry continually preaches the value and safety of our metro rail and encourages the use of cabs or the situation would be worse. However, a significant number of visitors arrive and move around the city by tour buses and, as the Washington Post pointed out earlier this week, the tour buses now have nowhere to drop visitors off for the White House except on H Street. The historic St. John's Church, the Hay Adams Hotel, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Decatur House and other neighbors can tell you what a nightmare this has become.

Further, our business and convention visitors take cabs to meetings and meals all over this downtown-Federal core. They are spending a great deal more time in the cab than they used to and they are not happy about it. These two problems are two more problems that we do not need in trying to keep the tourist, the business traveler, and the convention delegate coming to Washington as a destination. Other cities with whom we compete do not block the main street down their core or have tour buses staged blocks from one of their primary destinations.

We appeal to the decisionmakers to reconsider this decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street. Surely with the technology available there must be other ways to insure the President and his family's security.

In a plan for the next century recently presented by the National Capital Planning Commission, they state, "L'Enfant created a city

of broad avenues and grand public spaces radiating outward from the 'President House' and the 'Congress House' like spokes on a wheel." The NCPC plan for the next century involves further opening of these and other broad avenues to facilitate the visitor's exposure to their Nation's Capitol. It would be a shame to close the No. 1 avenue of them all.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Vetter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EMILY D. VETTER, PRESIDENT, HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON, DC

Good Morning Mr. Chairman and members of the District of Columbia Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. Thank you very much for having this hearing today. We are grateful for this opportunity to discuss the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and its negative effect on our city.

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Washington was designed, it has been rumored, to keep an invading Army confused. Not to help with the flow of two million commuters a day and 20 million visitors a year. Thanks to Mr. L'Enfant we are a lovely city of avenues and circles, a charm which is also a traffic nightmare. In spite of our excellent Metro Rail, these millions navigate by car, cab, and bus through our downtown-federal core every day.

While we can thank God that we are not a city of freeway ramps cutting through our beautiful vistas we are, unfortunately, a 20th century city living with an 18th century traffic pattern.

With the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street behind the White House, we have a difficult situation. As the White House is smack in the middle of this downtown-Federal core, these closings cut the primary flow of commuter and visitor traffic almost in half. At best, H Street and Eye Street, any time of day or evening, are a mess. With one lane out for a disabled car or illegally parked car, it can take up to an hour to go five or six blocks.

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We appeal to the decision makers to reconsider this decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street behind the White House. Surely with the technology available there must be other ways to insure the President and his family's security.

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Thank you again, Mr. Chairman for this opportunity.

Mr. LECOS. I am part of 500-member companies operating some 1,200 food service establishments and we are major contributors to the local economy.

I thank you for the opportunity today to appear before you to share the deep concerns the restaurant community has with the Federal Government in the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has had a significant and detrimental effect on the commerce and District restaurants. The nature of the restaurant industry in the District of Columbia relies on three distinct parties: The business and tourist or visitor trade and the residents of the District or the area.

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has negatively affected particularly two of these markets. Downtown restaurants in particular rely on strong business lunch trade. The closing of this avenue has created a traffic nightmare that precludes the normal travel within the downtown area.

The street closing, the four-block cab ride from the Old Executive Office Building to the Old Ebbitt Grille on 15th Street takes 20 minutes. This consumes almost half of one's normal lunch hour. What I guess was a mythical three-martini lunch in Washington has now become the 3-minute lunch because that is a time that is left over for eating after you are done traveling.

Mr. DAVIS. Parking too?

Mr. LECOS. Parking is another particular problem, the other segment, Mr. Chairman. The closing has put a real negative impact on day visits to the District of Columbia. The biggest factor in the decline of this part of the important visitor market is the hassle factor associated with trips into the city.

The two biggest hassles by day visitors are traffic and parking. Closing Pennsylvania Avenue has made the traditional Washington experience of a drive-by viewing of the White House an impossibility. It has added to the hassle of travel downtown and it has eliminated parking and created another reason for suburbanites to stay away from the city.

I was interested in the Post today. I know you asked about measure and sometimes measure is difficult. In the Post today they cited that traffic and inconvenience of a regular commuter to town, quoted Mr. Earnest Williams, who commutes from Baltimore, says it is a real inconvenience. I could stop by and get something to eat at McDonald's. Instead, I am sitting in traffic. I think that summarizes some of the impact on the District of Columbia.

I thank the committee for its actions today and I encourage this committee to act in support of reopening Pennsylvania Avenue. It is not only the Nation's right, it is the District's Main Street as well.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lecos follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM LECOS, PRESIDENT, RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON

SUBJECT: THE FEDERAL CLOSING OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

Good Morning.

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today to share with this committee the deep concerns the restaurant community in the District of Columbia has about the federal closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The

closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has had a significant and detrimental impact on commerce in the District's restaurants.

The nature of the restaurant industry in the District of Columbia, particularly for downtown restaurants, is a strong reliance on the "business lunch" trade. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has created a traffic nightmare during the lunch hour that precludes normal travel within downtown. A four block cab ride from the Old Executive Office Building on 17th Street to the Old Ebbitt Grill on 15th Street now takes twenty minutes. The travel time from the new Ronald Reagan Center at 13th and Pennsylvania Avenue to Maison Blanc at 17th and F streets consumes half of one's normal lunch hour. The mythical "three martini lunch" has been replaced by the very real "three minute lunch" because that is all the time left for eating when travel time is deducted from the lunch hour.

Another negative impact of the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue on restaurants in the District is the imposition the closing has placed on day visitors to the District. The biggest factor in the decline of this important visitor market is the "hassle factor" associated with trips into the city. The two biggest hassles identified by day visitors are traffic and parking. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has made the traditional Washington experience of the drive by viewing of the White House an impossibility, added to the traffic hassle of driving downtown, and created another reason for suburbanites to stay away from the city.

On behalf of the 1,500 restaurants in the District of Columbia, I encourage this committee to act in support of reopening Pennsylvania Ave—The Nation's Main Street.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you.

Jon.

Mr. GROVE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am executive vice president of the American Society of Association Executives or ASAE. We are pleased to have this opportunity to present testimony.

We are a building owner, by the way, as well as a resident on much referred to today I Street between 15th and 16th Streets. We are experiencing gridlock almost 100 percent of the time on I Street at the present time. ASAE is a professional society of more than 23,000 association executives and suppliers, representing more than 10,700 different associations at the national, State, and local level.

Associations are the third largest employer in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Associations play an important role in the area's economic expansion. D.C.-based associations are a net generator of jobs, both as employers, consumers, and creators of conventions that boost the local economy. Finally, associations attract talent, enhance research and education, and generally advance the image and prestige and culture of our entire region.

Today I speak for ASAE and associations affected by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. ASAE wants the subcommittee to know the unique problems associations and employers face under these new traffic patterns.

Let me clarify that ASAE absolutely supports the security needs of the White House and the Government agencies operating within the problem zone. But the unintended consequences of building a barrier around the very heart of our city is destroying our business climate, threatening future tourism and convention growth, and alienating the residents.

Specifically, I would like to address four points. I would just like to reiterate what the Mayor said today with regard to the economic waste, the countless hours of commuting for those individuals trapped in vehicles.

Second, one thing that has been alluded to today and/or implied is the threat to emergency vehicles traveling this area through

Georgetown and George Washington Hospitals. As I indicated, we sat on I Street. Every day we watched the difficulty that these vehicles are having to try to navigate I Street westward, especially the blockage of parking lanes.

This situation did not exist prior to the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. ASAE is particularly concerned about the capability of the District's fire and ambulance service to reach its own building should we encounter emergencies.

The last panel discussed erosion of the real estate values of the property. There is no need for me to say that other than to echo their concerns with regard to the economic issues related to real estate owners in the District that are affected by this closing of the street. The Convention Center's ability to attract large conventions and requirements to delegate a bus system is another big issue.

Most disturbing to ASAE is the belief that much of the District's future is tied to the success of D.C.-based associations. We direct millions of attendees to conventions of all sizes. The meetings industry itself is an \$86 billion a year market and it is a plum for those cities willing to accommodate the associations.

Trade shows, education seminars, cultural tours, activities like these are the truly economic boon to our Nation's Capital. Unfortunately, the District is in competition for this lucrative industry with very savvy competitors like Baltimore, Atlanta, Nashville, Orlando, et cetera. All things being equal, the District must eliminate its negative image not the least of which is the perception that it is impossible to travel, park, or enjoy the beauty and culture in the area.

With the promises of a new Convention Center, we wonder how the District can attract truly lucrative trade shows and meetings when we have developed a very negative image with our traffic snafu. A delegate bus shuttle system is required for large conventions at the existing Convention Center and will be even in greater demand with a new larger facility. The District of Columbia will lose convention business if the traffic problems caused to a great extent by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue are not relieved. At present, a convention bus system simply cannot function without changes, including the opening of Pennsylvania Avenue, a reliable enforcement of current laws, and of course new innovations, many of which have been discussed here today, and traffic control.

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to express our thoughts on the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Grove follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JON P. GROVE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

Mr Chairman, my name is Jon P. Grove, CAE¹ and I am Executive Vice President of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). ASAE is pleased to have this opportunity to present testimony.

ASAE is a professional society of more than 23,500 association executives and suppliers representing more than 10,700 associations at the national, state, and local levels. Associations are the third largest employer in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area.

Associations play an important role in the area's economic expansion. DC-based associations are a net generator of jobs—both as employers and consumers and cre-

¹ Certified Association Executive

ators of conventions that boost the local economy. Finally, associations attract talent, enhance research and education, and generally advance the image, prestige, and culture of our entire region.

Today I speak for ASAE and associations affected by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. ASAE wants the Subcommittee to know the unique problems associations and employers face under these new traffic patterns.

Let me clarify that ASAE absolutely supports the security needs of the White House and the Government agencies operating within the problem zone. But the unintended consequences of building a barrier around the very heart of our City is destroying our business climate, threatening future tourism and conventions growth, and alienating residents by preventing their full use of public and private parks, and institutions. Specifically, I would like to address four points from our own experience.

1. THE ECONOMIC WASTE OF COUNTLESS ADDITIONAL HOURS OF COMMUTING FOR THOSE TRAPPED IN VEHICLES.

Many of ASAE's 135 employees have encountered unnecessary and unpredictable delays, due to gridlocking. Employees and our members are frequently delayed 10 to 45 minutes, depending upon the severity of the blockage, and the availability of police personnel to re-direct traffic.

Traffic on "H" and "I" streets is frequently gridlocked during non-rush hour times, making vehicular travel a virtual nightmare in the heart of our City. Delivery and service vehicles are often illegally parked, creating further blockage. And virtually no policing of these violations occur, particularly during the evening rush hours. Tour buses are allowed to park illegally in areas around the White House, adding to traffic problems.

2. THE THREAT TO EMERGENCY VEHICLES TRAVELING THIS AREA TO GEORGETOWN AND GEORGE WASHINGTON HOSPITALS.

It is difficult for emergency vehicles to navigate the "I" street route westward, especially with the blockage of parking lanes and the gridlock that occurs many hours of the day. This situation did not exist prior to the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue.

ASAE is particularly concerned about the ability of the District's Fire and Ambulance Services to reach its own building should we encounter emergencies.

3. THE EROSION OF REAL ESTATE AND LEASEHOLD VALUES TO LOCAL PROPERTY OWNERS.

ASAE has experienced difficulty in leasing vacant space in its own building. Given the competitive situation between The City and suburbs, the problem of traffic congestion, parking, and the eroding quality of life in this area is surely affecting our ability to compete with those who can provide equivalent office space without all of the hassle of the "White House Wall."

4. THE CONVENTION CENTER'S ABILITY TO ATTRACT LARGE CONVENTIONS AND THE REQUIREMENT FOR A DELEGATE BUS-SHUTTLE SYSTEM.

Most disturbing to ASAE is our belief that much of the District's future is tied to the success of DC-based associations. We direct millions of attendees to conventions of all sizes. The meetings industry itself is a \$86 billion a year plum for those cities willing to accommodate associations.

Trade shows educational seminars, cultural tours ... activities like these are a true economic boon to the nation's capitol. Unfortunately, the district is in competition for this lucrative industry with very savvy competitors like Baltimore, Atlanta, and Orlando. All things being equal, the District must eliminate its negative image, not the least of which is the perception that it's impossible to travel, park, or enjoy the beauty and culture in the area. With promises of a new Convention Center, we wonder how the District can attract truly lucrative trade shows and meetings when we have developed a negative image with our traffic snafu. A delegate bus-shuttle system is required for large conventions at the existing convention center, and will be in greater demand with the new larger facility. D.C. will lose convention business if the traffic problems, caused to a great extent by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, are not relieved. At present a convention bus shuttle system simply cannot function without changes, including the opening of Pennsylvania Avenue, a reliable enforcement of current traffic laws, and new innovations in traffic control.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our thoughts on the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. We urge Congress and the White House to seek alternative solutions to ensure the safety and security of the White House and its inhabitants.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you.

Last but not least—we are very grateful you stayed. You got to hear a lot of other testimony. It is very, very important that we have your testimony on the record. At the time that the city's tax base is shrinking, their needs are growing. If we don't take governmental action, it will continue in this direction. This is one that has been pretty well-documented today.

On the one hand, we have had the city business community and the local residents unanimously saying it hurts the business community; it hurts everything. On the other hand, we have the administration officials who really didn't look at this. They looked at the other aspects, the security, and drove the decision. When you look only at one side of the coin, you are going to think it flips only one way. That is why it is important that you are here.

On the hotel and the restaurant area, the whole hospitality industry, we are hopeful for great gains in this city over the next decade. And when we get the Convention Center, which we will, and get all those issues resolved and move it through, there are just tremendous possibilities. Yet if you can't get through downtown, if you can't get there, those kinds of things aren't going to help.

I think Ms. Norton hit it on the head when she was talking with GSA earlier in terms of how they are going to handle parking grants in these other buildings on the street right now. It is tough enough and despite the city's needs for revenue, every time they come out and publicize the parking problems and the fact that you get a ticket, that deters people from coming downtown. Nobody wants to come down and get a \$50 ticket. That is the consequence of parking. I have had five of them in my first term. I'm helping the deficit every way I can.

But we need to be more protective in helping business. This is the other way this flips—if the Government wants to continue to close it, we have to look at a compensation base. I don't think, in the end, if the President would really look at this, that that is the conclusion he is looking at. He doesn't want to be the President that closed down America's Main Street. I don't think he has given it the focus.

It is hard for any President to override the security detail. You heard the head of the Secret Service say today that he didn't get his way all of the time. He would probably close National Airport if he had his way. He is not comfortable with that. That is his job to make those determinations. We have to take a look at the whole picture you are providing today, so I thank you. I can't think of any other softballs to throw your way. Unless you want to add anything else because I think we are all in agreement here.

Mr. GROVE. One comment, I had a very interesting day Tuesday. I spent all day with the architect of the new Convention Center that is going to be built with the discussions about what ought to be included and all of the opportunities that will be afforded the District of Columbia.

At that particular meeting it became very evident that there is just a great opportunity here for the District of Columbia to again expand its convention business. People like to meet in the Nation's Capital. I would just like to see that continue to realize its potential because it is certainly there. I applaud what both of you are

doing here to try to reverse this really very terrible situation so thank you.

Mr. DAVIS. Let me yield to my ranking member.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I have only a brief statement. I want to ask unanimous consent for the statement of the ranking member of the full committee to be placed into the record.

Mr. DAVIS. Without objection, so ordered.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Cardiss Collins follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CARDISS COLLINS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Mr. Chairman, I applaud this Subcommittee for continuing its careful examination of the impact of the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue. While it is clear this action was taken to address a potential threat to the safety and security of the President of the United States, the manner in which it was implemented and its impact on the District of Columbia have raised several important issues that, one year later, still have not been addressed.

Is there legal authority for the Secretary's action? What are the costs to the District that result from this action and will the District be reimbursed for them? How have the businesses in the area been affected by the closure and will they be compensated for any losses? Those who live and work in the District deserve immediate answers to these questions.

The security breaches which occurred at the White House last year—intrusions by air and on foot—have sensitized all of us to the need to resort to greater measures to protect the President and his family. What the Treasury Secretary and the Secret Service must recognize, however, is that what they do in this regard impacts the larger community.

The District's elected officials should be consulted about any security measures being taken that would impact areas of the city within their jurisdiction. The permanent closure of city streets, including Pennsylvania Avenue, is clearly within their jurisdiction. Local processes should be complied with by the Federal government wherever required, and if not required, whenever practical and appropriate.

The closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has necessitated the rerouting of traffic around what had served as a major traffic artery in downtown Washington. Numerous streets near the White House now bear the burden of additional traffic. Hundreds of on-street parking spaces have had restrictions placed on them in order to accommodate increased traffic flow.

Area businesses claim to have been significantly hurt by the closure. Access to the many offices and restaurants in the area has been hindered. Taxis now avoid the area because of the congestion. There is growing concern that some businesses may relocate from downtown to avoid the inconvenience. This would be a tragedy for the District which can hardly afford to lose any more of its tax base.

I am pleased to hear that the Federal Highway Administration has completed a study of the impact of the closure and that its findings will be presented at the hearing. It is unfortunate that up to now there has been no communication with the Subcommittee about the scope and results of this study. We can only hope there was a thorough examination of the situation and that the study addresses both traffic and environmental impacts, as well as the nature and extent of any costs which have resulted.

Mr. Chairman, I trust that the testimony presented at today's hearing will lead to a better understanding of the reasons behind the decision as well as the consequences of closing Pennsylvania Avenue. Again, Mr. Chairman, I thank you for cooperating with the Ranking Member in the pursuit of this matter.

Ms. NORTON. Mrs. Collins' statement. I want to thank the three of you for what you are doing for the city. Not the least of which, I assure you, is coming here to testify to give us further insight into this vexing problem. I know that each of you have been responsible for trying to help the city in numerous ways, and we appreciate, Mr. Grove, that associations come here, that conventions come here and, in no small part, associations to the region.

The hotel and restaurant industry, as far as I am concerned, are heroes in this region, because when the city couldn't get it together,

couldn't think of a way, even when it was prosperous when it should have, to build a convention center and though it was in insolvency, this industry stood up and said, hey, tax us. That is an extraordinary thing in the middle of an insolvency to have a industry step up and present the city with a win-win situation where the major costs are borne by industry; it is not exactly the way it has happened in most cities.

Let me leave you with my concern, the concern that I think the administration has to face. There is the possibility that by what they have done to Pennsylvania Avenue, they could take back a significant amount of what the hotel and restaurant industry has given the city with the convention center. I mean, they've just got to understand that, that when people come to a city, one of the first things they do is think about things like traffic, about how do I get from one place to the other.

The working group needs to put all of this on the table so that we are not dealing in a disconnected, uncoordinated way as if all of this were not happening in one of the most important cities in all of the world. I implore to you bear with us while we all try to find a way out of this mess.

Thank you all.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you. Ms. Vetter, Mr. Lecos, thanks for all the hard work that you do at the MCI Center and the Convention Center. Mr. Grove, the same to you.

We can see light at the end of the tunnel, but every time we take a couple of steps forward, we slide back with something else happening around us. And your testimony today will hopefully be helpful in getting us back on track on this.

There being no further business, the subcommittee meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:42 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

[Additional information submitted for the hearing record follows:]

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 6, 1995

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt
Secretary
Department of Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Babbitt:

This letter concerns the White House Security Review performed by the Treasury Department and the recent conversion of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House to a pedestrian area. I thank you for your support in the smooth transition on May 20. The Park Police and the Park Service were helpful, and I am pleased that the public is enjoying the new open space.

The President would like improvement in the appearance of Pennsylvania Avenue and State Place, and I am writing to enlist your help in this situation. I understand that the National Park Service is our best resource for taking such action, working with the group that has been assembled to develop a Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House. This group is chaired by Roger Kennedy, Director of the National Park Service. Both the First Lady's office and Mrs. Gore's office have expressed interest in being involved with this committee. Whether it is flowers, or benches, or removal of unnecessary signs, I would like an interim beautification, together with necessary security improvements, completed by September 1995.

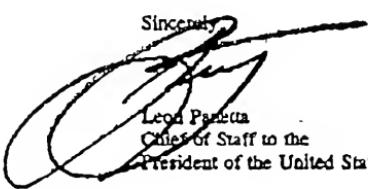
The President has also asked that a long term design for Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House be completed and constructed by the time of the Inaugural in 1997, if possible. The refurbished street in front of the White House will become a gathering place for citizens, a focal point for visitors, the major view from the White House, as well as the continued site of the Inaugural parade. It remains much treasured by historians, preservationists, and urban designers. While representatives of many groups must and should have a role, this project should take precedence over all other elements of the Comprehensive Design Plan, in order to complete it as quickly as possible.

I would like to report to the President on the progress of the beautification and long term plans. Please provide me with a report on your timetable and work plan, and estimated interim and permanent plan costs by July 17, 1995, together with a list of the committee members. In addition, please let me know your thoughts on private funding, and whether the White House can be helpful in this regard. Finally, please consider a possible role for interested members of Congress, and for Federal Highway Administration officials. Congressional leadership and FHA have been helpful regarding Pennsylvania Avenue.

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt
June 6, 1995
Page 2

Thank you for your participation in this great civic project. Jodie Torkelson, Director of White House Management and Administration, will join me in assisting the President in following through with this project. Please contact her if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Leon Panetta
Chief of Staff to the
President of the United States

cc: Secretary Rubin
Roger Kennedy, Director, National Park Service

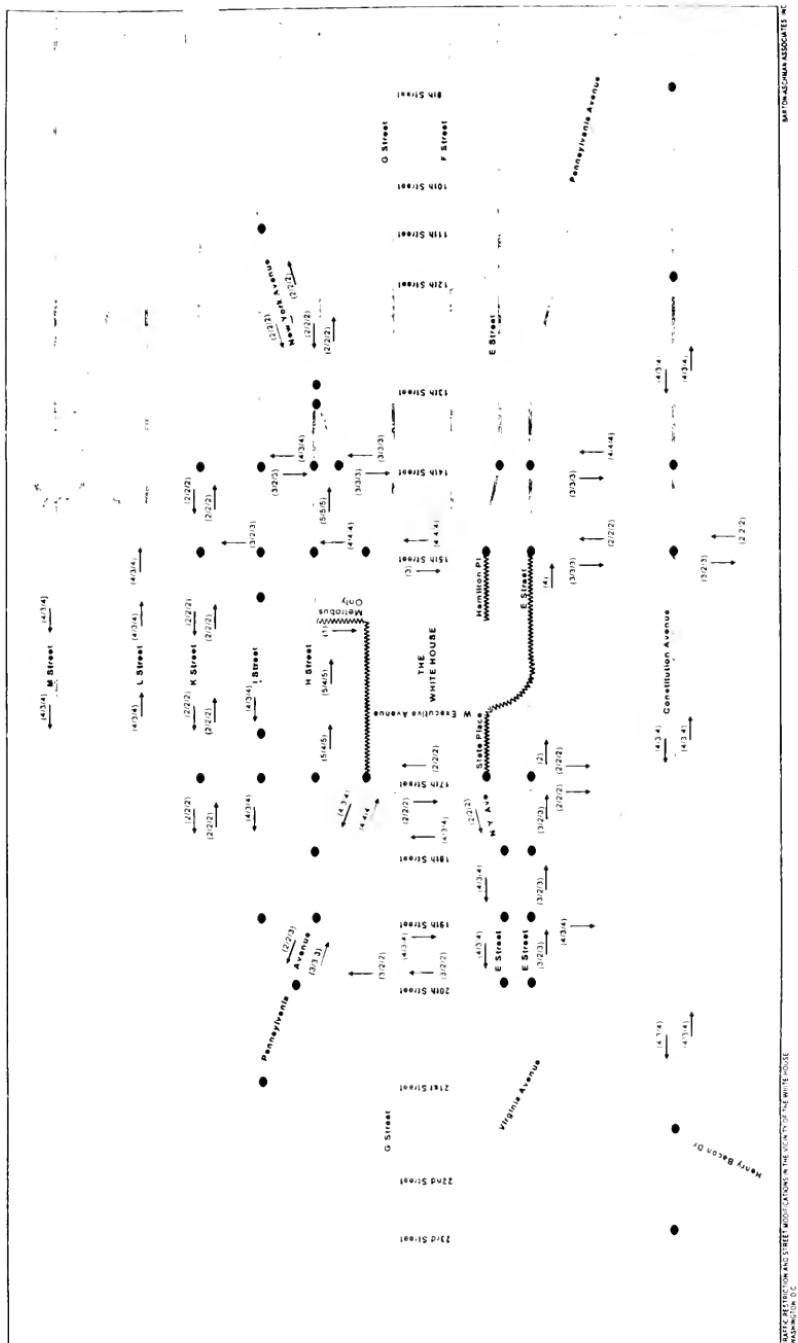


Figure 3
Key Traffic Count Locations



ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON

JUL 16 1996

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
United States House of Representatives
1415 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-5101

Dear Ms. Norton:

At the June 7, 1996 hearing on Pennsylvania Avenue before the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, District of Columbia Subcommittee, I was asked to provide certain information for the record. First, I was asked to provide you with information regarding how the D.C. Task Force will be addressing the financial issues raised at the hearing. As you know, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has chaired the Administration's D.C. Task Force; the Task Force was established in February of 1995 at the request of President Clinton to develop options to assist the District in fiscal recovery efforts.

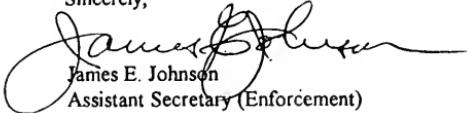
We believe that the Task Force is particularly well suited to address the economic issues related to the District of Columbia, including those related to the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue to unauthorized vehicular traffic. I have been informed by OMB that the D.C. Task Force will meet in mid-July, and the agenda for that meeting will include a review of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) traffic study and issues pertaining to the Treasury Secretary's order. This Task Force meeting will include representatives from the Department of the Treasury, the General Services Administration, the Department of the Interior, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Department of Transportation. The D.C. Subcommittee will be kept informed of the Task Force's work on this issue. If you have any questions regarding this issue, please have your staff contact Elisabeth Bresee, Deputy Assistant Secretary (Law Enforcement) at Treasury (622-0470), or Carol Thompson Cole, Executive Director of the D.C. Task Force at OMB (395-3193).

You also asked about the Treasury Secretary's legal authority to close Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic. Secretary Rubin's order directing the Secret Service to take this action was based on his authority under 18 U.S.C. Section 3056 and related statutes. Legal opinions that discuss the Secretary's authority were provided by Treasury's General Counsel and the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice in advance of the action. Lawyers from both Departments concluded that 18 U.S.C. Section 3056 grants to the Treasury Secretary the authority to take these actions so long as they are necessary in order to protect the President. The Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice stated in its opinion that "section 3056 grants the Secretary broad authority to take actions that are necessary and proper to protect the President. In light of the recommendations of the White House Security Review and the United States Secret Service's unique expertise and special responsibility in this matter, we agree with

[the] conclusion that section 3056 authorizes the actions contemplated by the Secretary." I have enclosed copies of the two opinions from counsel, as well as a one page legal issues summary sheet for your reference.

I know that the issue of Pennsylvania Avenue is very important to you and the Subcommittee. I hope that these responses address your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require additional information concerning this matter.

Sincerely,



James E. Johnson
Assistant Secretary (Enforcement)

Enclosures

cc: Representative Tom Davis



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004
 (202) 724-8052

CHARLENE DREW JARVIS

Councilmember-Ward 4
 Chairperson
 Committee on
 Economic Development

Committee Member
 Human Services
 Housing and Urban Affairs
 Labor and Human Rights

**Testimony of Councilmember Charlene Drew Jarvis
 Chair, DC Council Committee on Economic Development**

**Before the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
 Subcommittee on the District of Columbia
 on the Closing of Pennsylvania Avenue
 The Honorable Thomas M. Davis, Chair
 Friday, June 7, 1996**

Thank you Mr. Chairman for allowing me to submit this testimony to be included in the record of these proceedings. I am sorry that my schedule will not permit me to present them in person. I want to start by stating that I consider the security of the President, First Lady, and guests and employees at the White House to be of prime importance to our nation's security. I have been briefed on the security concerns of the Secret Service and I completely agree that permanent increased security around the White House has become necessary in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing and other terrorist acts across the country.

For this reason, I was careful not to criticize too harshly the initial temporary closing of the 1500-1700 blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue NW. I believed at the time that the Secret Service closed the Avenue that the city and federal government would work together to insure preservation of the city's interests while solving the security problems posed by unlimited street traffic across from the White House.

Today, I can say without hesitation that, this has not been achieved. The Park Service proposals for the redesign of the area north of the White House have taken flawed criteria and made the best of them. But this cannot be accepted. The process by which the criteria for redesigning "President's Park" were written excluded the National Capital Planning Commission, on which I sit, and the City's elected leaders. The product, therefore, ignores the vital interests of the city that could have been addressed in the context of security concerns. I urge every member of Congress to reject the Park Service plan and send the entire government apparatus looking at this issue back to the drawing board to address the city's interests before a single penny is spent to permanently alter Pennsylvania Avenue.

The 1500-1700 block section of Pennsylvania Avenue NW has traditionally served many functions: transportation, historical, ceremonial, commercial, cultural and recreational. It has

been the major east-west route of personal and commercial transportation through the heart of downtown, and the city developed in a particular way because of its existence. The Park Service design for these blocks has maintained the historical, ceremonial, cultural and recreational functions but has completely eliminated the transportation and commercial functions, and in so doing, has significantly and negatively impacted the District's future economic development potential. The design work must start over again, and the required solution must address the transportation and commercial needs of the District along with the security needs of the Secret Service while preserving the other functions that the Park Service has competently addressed.

I have been told that building a tunnel under that section of Pennsylvania Avenue, like the ones that run under Dupont, Thomas and Washington Circles is feasible, but was not considered because it conflicts with other White House planning goals. I suggest then, that we publicly reexamine and reevaluate these other planning goals and adjust them to accommodate this alternative design scheme.

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has made it harder for workers, residents and tourists to cross the city. It will negatively impact access to the new MCI arena, Convention Center, Opera, and millions of square feet of planned office, retail and residential development in the east end of downtown. Much of this negative impact cannot be measured today in lost economic values and revenue. Rather, it will be felt by the city, its citizens and businesses over time, and for many years to come as businesses and developers choose to locate in more accessible areas outside of downtown.

As a member of the City Council and National Capital Planning Commission, I will strongly support an effort to rethink how to preserve the President's security without building a terrible barrier in the heart of our city. I hope that you will join me on the NCPC in this effort and that you will use the influence of your Committee to reject the Park Service plans and reopen the design discussion with the city's transportation and economic interests fully part of the design criteria. Thank you for considering my views on this subject.



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20004

HILDA HOWLAND H. MASON
Councilmember at Large

May 23, 1996

Honorable Robert E. Rubin
Secretary
United States Department of the Treasury
1599 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Rubin:

I wish to add my voice to many who have already requested the re-opening of Pennsylvania Avenue and other streets in the vicinity of the White House to vehicular traffic. The District is incurring, on an annual basis, an additional \$300,000 subsidy to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority as a result of these street closings. Other costs to the District include lost parking revenues and lost sales at nearby commercial establishments. The heightened level of congestion and the loss of reliable movement in the area can be expected to produce declines in property values, and thereby reduce District revenues even further.

As with the others who have written, I consider the safety of the President and the White House itself to be of paramount importance. Yet, I recall reading an article by a prominent architect that the installation of two transparent barriers (of similar composition to those protecting bank tellers) placed about 4 feet apart inside the existing White House fence could accomplish the goal of protecting the White House from the impact of an Oklahoma-style truck bomb.

At a minimum, allowing Metrobus access would enhance travel opportunities for employees, tourists and residents with minimum risk. The setback of the White House from the street protects it from all but large quantities of explosives. Thus, pedestrians and cyclists continue to have unrestricted access to the area. It is highly unlikely that a Metrobus could be loaded with explosives. However, they are equipped with silent alarms. In the unlikely event that terrorists loaded a bus with explosives, a driver could notify authorities so that intervention would occur before the bus reached the immediate vicinity of the White House.

Thank you for your attention to this most urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Hilda Mason

Hilda Mason

HHMM:rr

LARSON, BALL & GOULD, INC.

Commercial Real Estate Services

FAX MEMORANDUM

June 6, 1996

TO The Honorable Thomas Davis United States House of Representatives
 FR M. A. Gould, Managing Principal, Larson, Ball & Gould, Inc.
 RE The "Closure" of Pennsylvania Avenue

As a citizen, long time resident and District of Columbia businessman, I urge you and your District Committee members to stand up and resist the efforts of the United States National Park Service and the Treasury Department (acting on behalf of the U. S. Secret Service) to permanently close Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

While I have, both as a District citizen and businessman, long felt disenfranchised and embarrassed by the condition of our Capital City and the ineptness of our local officials, this issue troubles me and my business associates even more because of the very word "permanent"

For clearly between the efforts of your Committee, the Financial Control Board and the mood of Congress, I believe the governance of the District of Columbia will improve. How that will evolve I do not know but I do know this: we have hit rock bottom and the problem is only temporary and will be resolved.

But if you and members of the House and Senate allow those funds to be appropriated (and I believe the \$ 239 million dollar estimate is only that, a best guess which will only go higher), the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue will HAVE to happen. It will be inevitable and there long after we're gone, you from public service and I into retirement or the grave!

The reality is that we need time to study this issue, not act emotionally or with haste because of a campaign of "fear management" being carefully orchestrated by the Treasury (aka Secret Service) and the current administration. One thing living in Washington, D. C. since 1950 has taught me: what appears to be a threat today is not tomorrow and Treasury Secretaries and Presidents come and go. But the citizens trying to live, work and commute within the District of Columbia will be here long after they're gone. Please keep that in mind and, on our behalf, resist those who want you to approve the permanent closure of our Nation's best known avenue.



LARSON, BALL & GOULD, INC.

Commercial Real Estate Services

May 23, 1996

The Honorable Thomas Davis, III
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

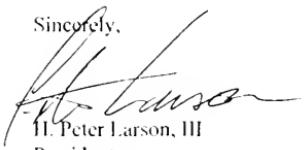
Re: Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Dear Mr. Davis:

I would appreciate your assistance in relaying my great concern regarding the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue to those individuals who have been charged with determining the future use of this primary thoroughfare. During the twenty-five years in which I have worked in the Farragut Square and McPherson Square areas, I have never seen such disruption nor experienced the impediments to commerce which have been forced upon us by the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue. While our offices are presently located in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia, we are currently exploring opportunities other than the District in order to inconvenience as few of our employees as possible. This is not my preference, simply a business reality brought on by this precipitous action. Additionally, this action is just one more obstacle to the progress of returning validity to the District of Columbia as a place in which to conduct business. We should be bringing the Central Business District and East End together, not creating barriers.

Thank you for your consideration. If you wish to speak further with me on this matter, I may be reached at (202) 842-0700.

Sincerely,


H. Peter Larson, III

President

HPL:emc

cc: Howard Dennis

6/6/96

Development Resources, Inc.

June 4, 1996

The Honorable Tom Davis
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Pennsylvania Avenue Closing

Dear Congressman Davis:

You may recall that I testified before the House Committee last year after the initial closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. At that time I was President of the DC Building Industry Association. Presently I serve as its immediate Past-President and I am Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of DRI, a downtown real estate development firm

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and the additional proposed closings of adjacent streets including the re-routing and partial closing of traffic behind the White house has created a division of our city. There has been, to the best of my knowledge, no useful dialogue as to the alternatives that would allow Pennsylvania Avenue to remain open while at the same time protecting the President and the White House.

The Federal Government has been, is, and will be, the "Company" in the Washington, DC "Town". To that extent, both the local business community and the Federal Government have to establish a better dialogue. No responsible "Company" and its "Town" would want to take unilateral action that would be damaging to the overall economic vitality of its city.

Congress should not allow the allocation of any monies to be spent that would further perpetuate the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. In summary, its just a bad idea!

Sincerely,

Greg Fazakerley
Chairman & CEO

cc: The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton

1747 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 825, Washington, DC 20006
202 833 3300 / FAX 202 833 4695

TANJA H CASTRO

AMRAM AND HAHN

PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

SUITE 601

815 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

(202) 833-3344

FACSIMILE

(202) 785-2357

June 6, 1996

By Facsimile

The Honorable Thomas M. Davis, III
Chairman, Subcommittee on the District of Columbia
United States House of Representatives
c/o Mr. Roland Gunn
Room B349A
Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 222515

Re: Pennsylvania Avenue Street Closing

Dear Mr. Gunn:

I am writing as a member of the District of Columbia Building Industry Association (DCBIA) and as an office tenant neighboring Pennsylvania Avenue. I wholeheartedly support the re-opening of Pennsylvania Avenue.

My office is located at 815 Connecticut Avenue, only one and a half blocks from Pennsylvania Avenue and the White House. My building is between "H" Street and "I" Street on which traffic patterns have been altered to accommodate the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. My clients, my staff and I have all been greatly inconvenienced by the street closing. Eye Street near my office is congested from before I arrive at 8:30 a.m. until after 7:00 p.m. every day, all day. I must now allow extra time to travel to and from Court, which I have to bill to my clients, because of the traffic congestion.

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has unfortunately created a fortress-like atmosphere in front of the White House. I believe that this has had a negative impact on the prestige of our nation's capital.

While I appreciate the need to protect the President and the White House, I do not believe that closing Pennsylvania Avenue provides sufficient additional protection when viewed in the context of the impact of the closing of the street.

AMRAM AND HAHN

The Honorable Thomas M. Davis, III
Chairman, Subcommittee on the District of Columbia
United States House of Representatives
c/o Mr. Roland Gunn
June 6, 1996
Page Two

There are alternative measures that can ensure the security of the White House that would permit automobile traffic to travel on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

Very truly yours,



Tanja H. Castro

**STATEMENT OF ROBERT V. BRANNUM
WASHINGTON, DC**

Closing Pennsylvania Avenue in Front of the White House

**FOR SUBMISSION TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
REFORM AND OVERSIGHT
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SUBCOMMITTEE**

Submitted for the record

10 June 1996

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, my name is Robert Vinson Brannum. I am a resident of the District of Columbia. During Congressional hearings regarding the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue a vibrant exchange occurred between Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and Assistant Secretary James Johnson regarding the Bloomingdale Civic Association. I am pleased to have the opportunity to offer this written statement regarding my meetings with then Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, Ronald Noble.

On 12 September 1994, then Secretary of the Treasury, Lloyd Bentsen announced an advisory panel would review White House security. Following this announcement there were reports this review panel would also consider the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. I became concerned the residents of the District of Columbia would not have any input into the review on this issue.

On 31 October 1994, 1 November 1994, 11 November 1994 and 3 February 1995, I wrote to the Secretary of the Treasury expressing my belief District residents were being left out of the review process. I wrote to the Secretary of the Treasury as President of the Bloomingdale Civic Association and on behalf of the DC Federation of Civic Associations.

On 15 and 21 March 1995, I met with Assistant Secretary Noble. The second meeting included other representatives of the DC Federation of Civic Associations. We, who met with Mr. Noble expressed our views Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House should not be closed. We clearly recognize the need to maintain security of the President, the First Family and the White House. However, this stretch of roadway is not only just a national symbol, but also it serves as a vital link in the District's transportation chain.

In our meeting we asked many questions and offered several suggestions. I presented to Mr. Noble a letter from the General Manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority on the impact of closing Pennsylvania Avenue. As residents of the District we asked

the same questions posed by the members of this subcommittee. An issue of critical importance to us was that there be direct involvement of the Mayor and City Council of the District of Columbia, as well as Representative Norton before a final decision is made. Mr. Noble indicated he was fully aware the residents of the District were "unique stakeholders" on the matter. We were given assurances District officials were involved and the Treasury Department had not made a final decision. We suggested the White House Security Review conduct public hearings and representatives from the White House Security Review attend a meeting of the Federation. While I had the opportunity to discuss our concerns on the impact of partial closing of Pennsylvania Avenue with Mr. Noble, I was not notified a final decision had been made.

Mr. Chairman, the security of the President, the First Family and the White House should not be minimized. Neither should the interests of the people who live and work in the District of Columbia. Across the nation and throughout the world there are persons who hold minimal, if any respect for human life, property, or national institutions. While some talk about a "new world order", there are those who believe in no order in the world.

From bombing buildings, torching houses of worship to political assassinations, we can not ignore the fact we are living in "perilous times". Regrettably single-minded zealots and demagogues and Klans of despots and extremists have moved many citizens to a life of fear. Our individual and rational desire to become more secure is changing how and where we live. Many of us are turning from each other, rather than toward one another. We are losing our community spirit and forgetting that which makes America's open society the model for the all the free world. What is needed Mr. Chairman is what you and other members of the Subcommittee discussed at the hearings - a balance between protecting the President and permitting me as a resident of the District to have renewed free access and mobility to the now closed section of Pennsylvania Avenue. *(However, this free access and mobility should not be limited to the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue closed in front of the White House. It should have similar access to the streets closed around the Capitol and Senate office buildings. These streets were closed by the*

US Senate without consultation with residents of the District of Columbia. An image of siege is as unsightly at the Capitol and Senate office buildings as it would be at the White House.)

Mr. Chairman, protecting the President, the First Family and the White House should not be a political issue. I know many in Congress who criticize the closure for its seemingly lack of resident input would not seek me out on any other issue.

In closing Mr. Chairman, on many occasions we have to make critical and difficult decisions. In many instances we seek out experts in areas such as law, medicine, education and finance. We have to make decisions based on the best information available at the time. I am not a security expert and I do not know the complete details for the decision to shut down Pennsylvania Avenue. The recommendation to close Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House can be supported by narrowly focusing attention to security of the President. However, in considering the environmental, financial and symbolic impact on the District and the country, the balance we seek shifts. Moreover, the suddenness by which the decision was made and announced along with efforts by the National Park Service to redesign permanently the area does not reflect sensitivity to the residents of the District of Columbia. As a native of the District of Columbia I would like Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House to be reopened to vehicular traffic.

It is my hope the Congress and the Department of the Treasury, with the involvement of District residents, will be able to reach a resolution which meets security needs and public access desires. I would also urge the Department of the Treasury to continue and expand its outreach efforts to the residents and elected officials of the District of Columbia.

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June 3, 1996

BY TELECOPY
(202) 225-4960

The Honorable Tom Davis, Chair
D.C. Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Rayburn House Office Building, Room B349A
Washington, D.C. 20515

Attention: Roland Gunn

Dear Congressman Davis

As a person who lives in Virginia and works in the District of Columbia, I am writing to express my opposition to the permanent closing to traffic of Pennsylvania Avenue, Executive Avenue and State Place. The closing of these streets, and the rerouting of traffic to other streets, continues to cause extreme traffic congestion, and gridlock at many intersections, during the morning, noon and evening rush hours. It doesn't take a traffic engineer to determine this to be a fact.

Those of us who work hard to promote the economic development of our city are especially concerned that this Executive Branch determination is having a negative effect on business and commerce in the District of Columbia. The economic well being of the District is important to the economic well being of the entire metropolitan Washington area. We are already competing with the surrounding jurisdictions in terms of real estate rents, parking availability, taxes and other impositions. The inability to easily move across town is being cited by some organizations as yet another negative factor for either locating in, or remaining in, the city.

As the newspapers have reported, these closures are also having an effect on tourism in the city. However, replacing the concrete jersey barriers with concrete flower pots, or with some historically-inspired "Williamsburg-esque" design is not the answer. Organizations representing a diverse cross-section of the District are no record in opposition to these closings.

WILKES, ARTIS, HEDRICK & LANE
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June 3, 1996
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Many in the federal government seem to forget the fact that, in addition to being the seat of the federal government, the District of Columbia is also a thriving business center. Surely, any rational, legitimate concerns for Presidential security can be addressed in a manner which allows vehicles to continue using Pennsylvania Avenue, Executive Avenue and State Place, and they have for many, many years.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please include this letter in the record of your Subcommittee hearing on June 7.

Sincerely,



Christopher H. Collins

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